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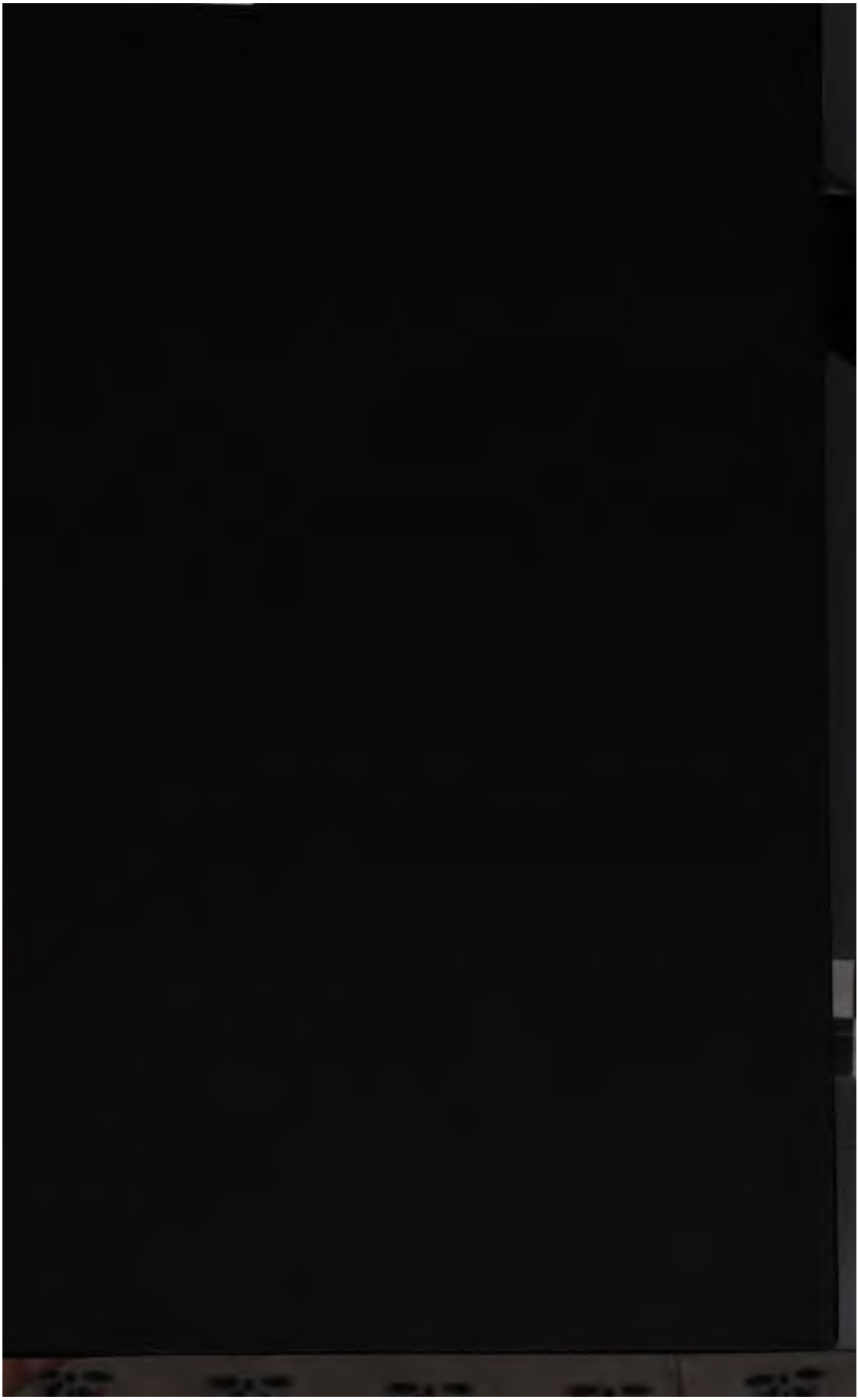

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COMMENTARY

ON

THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

VOL. IV.

[Entered at Stationers' Hall.]

EDINBURGH : PRINTED BY T. CONSTABLE, PRINTER TO HER MAJESTY.

221.2

COMMENTARY

ON THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN, AND COLLATED WITH THE LATEST FRENCH VERSION,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM PRINGLE.

VOLUME FOURTH.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR THE CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY.
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THE

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF

The Calvin Society.

INSTITUTED IN MAY MDCCCXLIII.

FOR THE PUBLICATION OF NEW TRANSLATIONS OF THE WORKS OF JOHN CALVIN.

"The Venerable Calvin."—"I hold the memory of Calvin in high veneration; his Works have a place in my library; and in the study of the Holy Scriptures he is one of the Commentators I most frequently consult."—Bishop Horsley.

"Calvin's Commentaries remain, after three centuries, unparalleled for force of mind, justness of exposition, and practical views of Christianity."—Bishop of Calcutta, (*Wilson.*)

"The Genevese Reformer (Calvin) surpassed Knox in the extent of his theological learning, and in the unrivalled solidity and clearness of his judgment."—M'Crie, *Life of Knox.*

"A minister without this, is without one of the best Commentaries on the Scriptures, and a valuable body of Divinity."—Bickersteth, *Christian Student.*

FOR THE YEAR MDCCCLIII.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY T. CONSTABLE, PRINTER TO HER MAJESTY.
MDCCCLIV.

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Secretary, Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A. Scot.

CALVIN SOCIETY'S OFFICE, 9 NORTHUMBERLAND STREET, EDINBURGH.

New Subscribers are still admitted **on the original terms.** All the Works hitherto published may be obtained at once on transmitting £11 to the Secretary; or, parties may take one or more years' Books, and obtain the remainder at intervals, quarterly or yearly, or when most convenient for them.

Separate Commentaries, or odd volumes, may now be had by *Non-Subscribers* at 7s. 6d. per vol., (excepting the INSTITUTES, which are 10s. each vol.)

☞ *Post-Office Orders and Bank Bills or Cheques to be made payable to the Secretary, and transmitted* **direct** *to the Office.*

THE

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1853.

New English Translations of Calvin's Works.

For a considerable time previous to the **Report for 1852** being circulated, a very large number of the Subscribers to the Society had urgently suggested the propriety of bringing this New Translation Scheme to a close, as speedily as should be deemed compatible with the present Series embracing the whole of the Practical Commentaries of the great Genevan Reformer. This was accordingly notified in last year's Report, and no time was lost in maturing arrangements for closing the Society's operations at the end of the year **1855.**

With this view, exertions have been made to confine the remaining Publications strictly to the early completion of Calvin's Commentaries on those Books of the Old Testament which have been in preparation for several years past, including the Book of Joshua; while, at the same time, the whole of the remaining Commentaries on the New Testament (which have likewise been for a long time in careful and steady progress) shall be presented to the Subscribers during **1854** and **1855**—the two last years of the Society.

It has therefore been Resolved, after mature consideration, that, with the Divine permission and blessing, the Calvin Translations shall be brought to a termination **in December 1855,** when it is purposed to circulate the last two volumes.

According to this plan, the present Series, when perfected, will comprehend the whole of Calvin's practical expositions on the Holy Scriptures. For the information of such of our Subscribers as have not convenient access to the Amsterdam Edition of the collected Works of Calvin, in the original, it may be ex-

plained that the only portions of that venerable and illustrious man's Theological Writings which our plan does not now admit of being translated by the Society, are: The Commentaries on the first book of SAMUEL and the book of JOB; his MISCELLANEOUS TREATISES and THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS; his SERMONS, CONTROVERSIAL WRITINGS, additional TRACTS, and MINOR WORKS, besides the extensive and valuable EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE, to which latter portion special reference was made in the last Report. These various Works would probably have afforded matter for above thirty additional Volumes, independently of the uncollected Publications in French and Latin, and the Collection of unpublished Manuscripts which are still preserved at Geneva—making in all as large a Collection of Volumes as those we have already been enabled to prepare for our Members!

The Secretary has the greatest satisfaction in announcing, that the EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE OF CALVIN, to which he alluded in the Report for 1852 as being in the course of arrangement for publication, will now speedily be published by his friend, Mr. THOMAS CONSTABLE. From the origin of this Society, it had been a favourite and anxious desire of the Secretary to have collected and published in the present Series A COMPLETE COLLECTION OF THE LETTERS OF CALVIN which remain; and with that view he had, for a period of several years, a good deal of correspondence for the purpose of securing all that could then have been gathered in Geneva and France, &c. However, he most cheerfully relinquished all idea of prosecuting that publication, as soon as he ascertained, from the best authority, that the whole of these materials had already been collected, and were in the course of being arranged for publication by Dr. JULES BONNET. As a Prospectus of this most interesting Collection has already been prepared, it is only necessary to refer the Subscribers to the copies of it which accompany the present Report. It is trusted that the announcement will be received with the liveliest interest by the Religious Public, as well as by literary and historical readers, as one of great importance and value at this most remarkable era of the world.

With these brief explanations as to **the completion of the present Series, in December 1855,** it only remains to state, that the Books which have been distributed in return for the Annual Subscriptions received for the year **1853,** are the following:—

I. COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET DANIEL, Vol. II., (*the last,*) with Dissertation, a New Translation of the Hebrew and Chaldee Text of Daniel, a Summary of the Historical and Prophetic portions of the whole Book, according to Calvin's view of its contents. A Notice of Ancient Codexes and Versions; a List of the most valuable Ancient and Modern Expositions of this Prophet, with concise Epitomes of the most important; an Index of the Scripture Passages quoted throughout; an Index to the Hebrew words illustrated; and a copious Index of the chief words and subjects treated of in these Volumes. By the Rev. Thos. Myers, M.A., Vicar of Sheriff-Hutton, Yorkshire.

II. COMMENTARIES ON THE LAST FOUR BOOKS OF MOSES, ARRANGED IN THE FORM OF A HARMONY, Vol. II., with Annotations, &c., by the Rev. Charles W. Bingham, M.A., Rector of Melcombe-Horsey, Dorset, and formerly Fellow of New College, Oxford.

III. COMMENTARIES ON THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH, Vol. IV., (*the last,*) with New Translation of the Text; Passages of Scripture explained and quoted; Hebrew and Greek words illustrated; and copious Index to the Four Vols. By the Rev. William Pringle, Auchterarder.

IV. COMMENTARIES ON THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE HEBREWS, (*completed,*) in one Vol., with Annotations; New Translation of the Text of the Epistle; Passages of Scripture explained and quoted; Hebrew and Greek words illustrated; and a copious Index. By the Rev. John Owen, Vicar of Thrussington, Leicestershire.

These Volumes form the Twenty-first and Twenty-second Issues.

The four Volumes above-mentioned are in the course of being transmitted, through the usual channels, to every Member whose Subscriptions have hitherto reached THE OFFICE, 9, Northumberland Street, Edinburgh. Parties whose friends or Correspondents have omitted to remit their ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS and ARREARS, will be so good as instruct them to do so *without delay*, by Post-Office or Bank Orders, or Cheques, payable to the Secretary, and their Parcels will immediately be sent *free of carriage* to any address in London, Dublin, or Edinburgh; or they will be booked at Railway Offices, or other Public conveyances, to be forwarded from thence,

at their own risk and expense, to their respective destinations. Those who wish their Bankers to pay their Subscriptions yearly, will be pleased to send the Secretary a special Mandate to that effect.

To facilitate the prompt and accurate delivery of future parcels, Subscribers are particularly requested to send timely notice to the Office of the Secretary of all the changes of Residence and Address, or of any alteration in the present mode of conveyance.

The necessity of making prompt and punctual payment of the Annual Contributions is again most earnestly impressed on the Subscribers, so as to enable the Secretary to arrange the various materials—to put the Works to press at an earlier date than heretofore—and to regulate the number of copies to be printed. If the Members were uniformly to transmit their Annual payments, in the usual manner, **direct to the Office in Edinburgh, in January or February of each year,** all the other arrangements would be greatly facilitated; and *early delivery of the Books would also be secured* till the close of the Society's operations.

THE WORKS which are in preparation for THE YEAR 1854, in return for the Annual Subscription **payable on the First day of January 1854,** and which will form the *Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Issues*, are the following:—

1. COMMENTARY AND HARMONY OF THE PENTATEUCH. VOL. III.
2. COMMENTARY ON THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH. VOL. IV.
3. COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLES TO THE GALATIANS AND EPHESIANS.—(*Completed.*)
4. COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF JOSHUA, &c.—(*Completed.*)

THE WORKS for the YEAR **1855** are also in active preparation. From the arrangements which have already been made, the Secretary can pledge himself that, under the permission and blessing of God, this invaluable Series of the WORKS OF CALVIN will be brought to a satisfactory termination in the month of December of that year, (**1855.**)

APPEAL TO THE SUBSCRIBERS.

On several occasions, the Secretary has made known to the Subscribers to this Scheme, in general terms, the very heavy advances he has been induced to make in furtherance of the amended plan of New and Original Translations of the choicest of the Works of Calvin. This he voluntarily undertook in the Spring of the year **1844**, after the Committee of Management had resiled from all **pecuniary responsibilities**, as they were unanimously of opinion that the Annual Subscription of £1 was inadequate to meet the increased outlays necessary for producing New Translations, and providing costly books of reference for the use of the Editors in preparing their respective volumes. From that date, all the anxious and laborious duties of Editorial Secretary, Conductor, and Treasurer of the entire Scheme devolved upon him; and since the establishment of the Society **in 1843**—now a period of eleven years—he has, from year to year, unshrinkingly provided the funds necessary for the preparation and publishing of this very extensive Series, at present consisting of **Forty-Four large Octavo Volumes.** This has been done on such a scale, and the works have been produced at such an expense, that the super-expenditure, (over and above all Subscriptions and Sales of the books,) now amounts to **upwards of Three Thousand Pounds.** Since the year **1844** there has never been fewer than **Ten or Twelve Volumes** in preparation, to provide for the regular and uninterrupted supply of carefully elaborated and revised materials. This fact will, of itself, shew to Subscribers who are not conversant with such matters, the great difficulties and perplexities attending the publication of Works on a scale of such magnitude. From first to last he has received no pecuniary aid from Members, excepting in two instances, where double subscriptions have been transmitted for the last three or four years, by kind and considerate Members who were desirous of shewing, in this manner, the zeal they take in the successful termination of the Scheme, and the expression of their sympathy, by contributing thus far towards the reduction of these outlays.

The Secretary trusts that it is only necessary to let these few and simple facts be known to the Subscribers at large, to induce them, and the well-wishers of such undertakings as the present, to take a much warmer and heartier interest in the increased circulation of **complete Sets of the Works.** With a little organization and management,

it is certain that **at least 350 or 400 Sets of the Works** could readily be disposed of by Members, individually, or by the operations of a regularly organized and active Committee. It is hoped that every one who is desirous of promoting this object will cheerfully co-operate in enlarging the numbers of our Subscribers and the sale of the Publications by every means in their power.

An earnest Appeal is therefore once more made to EACH SUBSCRIBER to lend his utmost influence and systematic personal support towards the extension of the Sale of complete Sets of the Calvin Society's Publications, and the increase of its regular Members.

There are comparatively few individuals who cannot prevail on one or more of their friends to join our Scheme, or at least influence others who have the means, or have the direction of Parish, Congregational, Vestry or Lending Libraries, Religious Societies, Reading Clubs, and other Public Institutions, to purchase the whole Series for their respective Libraries. Other Subscribers might, individually, or with the pecuniary assistance of a few private friends, present Sets of the Works to their own MINISTERS, to MISSIONARY SOCIETIES, to deserving STUDENTS OF DIVINITY, or to religious friends.

A few honourable and praiseworthy instances may be given at random from the Subscription Lists of the Society, in illustration of this efficient mode of increasing the circulation of these Books:—

THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND have regularly supplied *Six Missionaries* on their INDIAN SCHEME, and *Four Missionaries* employed in the CONVERSION OF THE JEWS, since the institution of this Society—with complete Sets of the Works.—Private individuals have likewise generously presented Sets to the LONDON CITY MISSION; RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY; STEPNEY COLLEGE; HOMERTON COLLEGE; LIVERPOOL SUNDAY INSTITUTE; MADEIRA LIBRARY; PARKER SOCIETY; WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODIST COLLEGE, TREVERCA; St. Edmund's Hall, OXFORD; King's College, ABERDEEN; Marischal College, Theological Library, ABERDEEN; Universities of EDINBURGH and ST. ANDREWS; Theological Library, EDINBURGH COLLEGE; Free Church College, EDINBURGH; Baptist College, BRISTOL; Presbytery of Cape Breton, NOVA SCOTIA; Divinity College, BELFAST; Diocesan Library, CASHEL; Dean and Chapter Library, PETERBOROUGH; ROTHERHAM COLLEGE; Edinburgh SELECT SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARY; Edinburgh PHILOSOPHICAL

only the appointment or consecration by which Christ is set apart to that office, that no man may think that he intruded into it without being duly authorized. "For no man," as the Apostle says, "taketh this honour upon himself, but he who is called by God, as Aaron was. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but he who spake to him, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Heb. v. 4, 5.)

Moreover, the Prophet does not describe the commencement of the period, as if it were only from the womb that God began to call him; but it is as if he had said, "Before I came out of the womb, God had determined that I should hold this office." In like manner Paul also says that he was "set apart from the womb," (Gal. i. 15,) though he had been "elected before the creation of the world." (Eph. i. 4.) To Jeremiah also it is said, "Before thou camest out of the womb, I knew thee." (Jer. i. 5.) In short, the meaning is, that Christ was clothed with our flesh by the appointment of the Father, in order that he might fulfil the office of Redeemer, to which he had been appointed.

From my mother's belly he hath had my name in remembrance. This has the same import as the former clause; for by "the remembrance of the name" is meant familiar acquaintance. He therefore distinguishes himself from the ordinary rank of men, because he was elected to an uncommon and remarkable office.

2. *And he hath placed my mouth as a sharp sword.* He employs a twofold comparison, that of "a sword" and of "a quiver," in order to denote the power and energy of the doctrine; and he shews why he was called, and why he was honoured by a name so excellent and illustrious, namely, that he may teach; for this is what he means by the word "mouth." Christ hath therefore been appointed by the Father, not to rule, after the manner of princes, by the force of arms, and by surrounding himself with other external defences, to make himself an object of terror to his people; but his whole authority consists in doctrine, in the preaching of which he wishes to be sought and acknowledged; for nowhere else will he be found. He asserts the power of his

RE-ISSUE

OF

The New Translations of Calvin's Works.

In compliance with various suggestions which had been made from time to time, it was resolved early in 1850, to make a RE-ISSUE OF THE WHOLE OF CALVIN'S WORKS so far as they have hitherto been completed. This RE-ISSUE commenced on 1st November 1850, to enable NEW SUBSCRIBERS to join the Society on the most favourable terms, (being the same price as was paid for the original Subscription.) Individuals now joining, may thus procure the Books, either together or periodically, as shall be most convenient for them;—and non-subscribing Clergy, Students of Divinity, and others, will also be enabled, by the plan announced in the Prospectus, to *select* any of the SEPARATE COMMENTARIES or PORTIONS of these Translations which they may require.

For the particulars of the Re-Issue, reference is made to the Circular annexed to the present Report. Subscribers and their friends who are desirous of assisting in forwarding the object of this proposal, will be supplied with copies for circulation on applying at the Secretary's Office, or packets will be sent to any addresses which shall be forwarded to him for that purpose.

The whole Series of the eleven years' Works hitherto published, is now ready at the Depository, for immediate delivery, free of Charge, in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh.

RECEIPTS FOR THE SUBSCRIPTION DUE ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, will be ready at the OFFICE in Edinburgh previous to the close of each year, so as to be transmitted *in course of post* to Subscribers, or their Correspondents or Agents, sending the remittances, which, for the sake of greater security, are requested to be *uniformly* made, not in Cash or Bank Notes, but by Post-Office Orders, Bank Bills, or Cheques, payable to the Secretary.

*** *It will be esteemed as a personal favour, and will likewise greatly tend to alleviate the present pressure, if those Subscribers who can without inconvenience, advance the Subscriptions for* **1854** *and* **1855**, *will kindly include both years' Subscriptions in their next remittance in January.*

ROBERT PITCAIRN,
Acting and Editorial Secretary.

CALVIN SOCIETY'S OFFICE,
9, NORTHUMBERLAND STREET, EDINBURGH,
1*st December* 1853.

1st January 1854.

PROSPECTUS OF CALVIN'S WORKS.

NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS.

THE WHOLE SERIES, SO FAR AS PUBLISHED, MAY BE HAD **immediately, on remittance by Orders payable to the Secretary;** OR THE ISSUES WILL BE DELIVERED QUARTERLY OR YEARLY, AS SHALL BE MOST CONVENIENT TO INTENDING SUBSCRIBERS, **until the completion of the Works**—in December 1855.

Calvin Translation Society,

INSTITUTED MAY, 1843.

Patrons.

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THE MARQUESS OF CHOLMONDELEY.
LORD VISCOUNT HILL.
THE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.
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THE BISHOP OF ILLINOIS, U.S.
LORD RAYLEIGH.

Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A.Scot. Secretary. **Office, 9 Northumberland Street, Edinburgh.**

"THE VENERABLE CALVIN.—I hold the memory of CALVIN in high veneration; his Works have a place in my library; and in the study of the Holy Scriptures he is one of the Commentators I most frequently consult."—BISHOP HORSLEY.

"CALVIN'S COMMENTARIES remain, after three centuries, unparalleled for force of mind, justness of expression, and practical views of Christianity."—BISHOP OF CALCUTTA, (*Wilson.*)

"THE Geneves Reformer (CALVIN) surpassed KNOX in the extent of his theological learning, and in the unrivalled solidity and clearness of his judgment."—M'CRIE, *Life of Knox.*

"A Minister without this, is without one of the best Commentaries on THE SCRIPTURES, and a valuable body of Divinity."—BICKERSTETH, *Christian Student.*

Four Large Octavo Volumes Yearly to Subscribers, for One Pound.

AMONGST the Theological Works which were widely circulated in England and Scotland during the latter part of the Sixteenth Century, Translations of many of the Writings of JOHN CALVIN had a distinguished place. Of his eminence as a DIVINE and COMMENTATOR ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, it is unnecessary here to speak, though few are now fully aware of the very high respect in which his Works were held by all the leading English Reformers and Ecclesiastical Writers from Cranmer to Hooker, and the extensive benefits resulting to the Church of Christ from his literary labours. At that time, doctrines which he never held were not attributed to him; nor were sentiments imputed to him which he never advocated. Bishop Horsley well advised, to ascertain what is Calvinism and what is not.

It has now been resolved not to reprint any of *the old Translations*, but to have accurate and faithful NEW TRANSLATIONS prepared for the present undertaking. There can be no doubt that this important SERIES OF THE THEOLOGY OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION will be acceptable and useful at the present period—to all who value true Scriptural Doctrines—who thoroughly approve the principles of the Protestant Faith—and who duly appreciate these valuable Writings; but especially are they needful to all who are engaged in the study of Divinity and in the exposition of THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

It is proposed to print NEW TRANSLATIONS of all CALVIN'S PRACTICAL COMMENTS ON SCRIPTURE, INSTITUTES and THEOLOGICAL TREATISES, so as to present A COMPLETE COLLECTION OF HIS CHOICEST WORKS. *Four volumes* (each containing on an average 500 pages) will be delivered to every Subscriber, for each Annual Subscription of One Pound, *paid in advance* on 1st January yearly. Copious Tables and Indices are appended to each of the Commentaries, &c., to facilitate reference, and to render the whole Series more generally useful and acceptable to every class of readers. To secure the efficient working of this plan, the impression is limited to 2500 copies.

For the above mentioned Annual Subscription of One Pound, it is arranged that in two years the most important of the Translations will be completed, and the present Series closed in December **1855.** Each work will be independent of the rest; but the whole will be uniform in size and type, as far as the extent of the respective Work will permit.

☞ Managers of Public, Parochial, Congregational, Vestry or Lending Libraries, Religious Societies, Reading Clubs, and other Public Institutions, are respectfully invited to consider the advantage of subscribing to these Translations. Parties wishing to make presents to **Parish Libraries, Ministers, Students of Divinity, or Private friends,** would also find that these Works could not fail to be a very useful and acceptable gift.

Subscription [£1] payable in advance, on 1st January.

*** Any portion of the above Works, odd Volumes, or separate Commentaries, **may be selected by Non-Subscribers** at 7*s.* 6*d.* per Volume. The INSTITUTES (or odd Volumes of that Work to complete sets) supplied at 10*s.* per Volume.

Books delivered free in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh.

he hath committed his word to the care of the Church, that by her ministrations it may be published throughout the whole world.

In thee I will be glorified. At length, in the conclusion of the verse he shews what is the design of these ministrations, and for what purpose they who preach the Gospel are called by God; namely, that they may zealously display his glory, and may likewise promote it among others, which Christ also teaches us in the Gospel, "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee." (John xvii. 1.) This is a very high honour conferred on poor, feeble men, when the Lord appoints them, though corrupt and depraved, to promote his glory; and therefore we ought to be the more encouraged to render to him our service and obedience. Yet God intends to express something more, that, notwithstanding the efforts of Satan and all wicked men, the power of God will be victorious, so that Christ shall triumph gloriously, and the majesty of God shall shine forth in his Gospel.

4. *And I said, In vain have I toiled.* The Prophet here brings forward a grievous complaint in the name of the Church, yet in such a manner that, as we have formerly remarked, we must begin with the Head. Christ therefore complains along with his members, that it appears as if his labour were thrown away; for, having formerly pronounced a high and striking commendation on the power and efficacy of the word which proceedeth out of his mouth, while yet it scarcely does any good, and the glory which God demands from the ministration of it does not shine forth, he therefore introduces the Church as complaining that she spends her labour fruitlessly, because men do not repent at the preaching of heavenly doctrine.

It was highly necessary that the Prophet should add this; first, that we may know that the fruit which he mentioned is not always visible to the eyes of men; for otherwise we might call in question the truth of the word, and might entertain doubts if that which is so obstinately rejected by many was the word of God. Secondly, it was necessary, that we may advance with unshaken firmness, and may commit our labour to the Lord, who will not permit it to be ulti-

mately unproductive. The Prophet therefore intended to guard against a dangerous temptation, that we may not, on account of the obstinacy of men, lose courage in the middle of our course. And indeed Christ begins with the complaint, for the purpose of affirming that nothing shall hinder him from executing his office. The meaning of the words might be more clearly brought out in the following manner: "Though my labour be unprofitable, and though I have almost exhausted my strength without doing any good, yet it is enough that God approves of my obedience." Such is also the import of what he adds,—

But my judgment is before Jehovah. Although we do not clearly see the fruit of our labours, yet we are enjoined to be content on this ground, that we serve God, to whom our obedience is acceptable. Christ exhorts and encourages godly teachers to strive earnestly till they rise victorious over this temptation, and, laying aside the malice of the world, to advance cheerfully in the discharge of duty, and not to allow their hearts to languish through weariness. If therefore the Lord be pleased to make trial of our faith and patience to such an extent that it shall seem as if we wearied ourselves to no purpose, yet we ought to rely on this testimony of our conscience. And if we do not enjoy this consolation, at least we are not moved by pure affection, and do not serve God, but the world and our own ambition. In such temptations, therefore, we should have recourse to this sentiment.

Yet it ought to be observed, that here Christ and the Church accuse the whole world of ingratitude; for the Church complains to God in such a manner as to remonstrate with the world, because no good effect is produced on it by the doctrine of the Gospel, which in itself is efficacious and powerful. Yet the whole blame rests on the obstinacy and ingratitude of men, who reject the grace of God offered to them, and of their own accord choose to perish. Let those persons now go and accuse Christ, who say that the Gospel yields little fruit, and who defame the doctrine of the word by wicked slanders, and who throw ridicule on our labours as vain and unprofitable, and who allege that, on the con-

trary, they excite men to sedition, and lead them to sin with less control. Let them consider, I say, with whom they have to do, and what advantage they gain by their impudence, since men alone ought to bear the blame, who, as far as lies in their power, render the preaching of the Word unprofitable.

Godly ministers, who bitterly lament that men perish so miserably by their own fault, and who sometimes devour and waste themselves through grief, when they experience so great perversity, ought to encourage their hearts by this consolation, and not to be alarmed so as to throw away the shield and spear, though sometimes they imagine that it would be better for them to do so. Let them consider that they share with Christ in this cause; for Christ does not speak of himself alone, as we formerly mentioned, but undertakes the cause of all who faithfully serve him, and, as their advocate, brings forward an accusation in the name of all. Let them therefore rely on his protection, and allow him to defend their cause. Let them appeal, as Paul does, to the day of the Lord, (1 Cor. iv. 4,) and let them not heed the calumnies, reproaches, or slanders of their enemies; for their judgment is with the Lord, and although they be a hundred times slandered by the world, yet a faithful God will approve and vindicate the service which they render to him.

On the other hand, let wicked men, and despisers of the word, and hypocrites, tremble; for when Christ accuses, there will be no room for defence; and when he condemns, there will be none that can acquit. We must therefore beware lest the fruit which ought to proceed from the Gospel should be lost through our fault; for the Lord manifests his glory in order that we may become disciples of Christ, and may bring forth much fruit.

5. *And now saith Jehovah.* By this verse he confirms the former statement, and yields more abundant consolation, by repeating that calling and the testimony of conscience, which ought to be regarded by us as a fortress; for there is nothing that gives us greater distress and anxiety, than to entertain doubts by whose authority, or by whose direction everything

is undertaken by us. For this reason Isaiah reminds us of the certainty of our calling.

Who formed me from the womb to be his servant. In the first place, godly teachers, along with Christ who is their Prince, say that they have been "formed" by a divine hand; because God always enriches and adorns with necessary gifts those whom he calls to the office of teaching, who derive from the one fountain of the Spirit all the gifts in which they excel. Thus "the Father hath sealed" (John vi. 27) his Only-begotten Son, and next prepares others, according to their degree, to be fit for discharging their office. At the same time, he points out the end of the calling; for to this end have Apostles and teachers of the Church been appointed, to gather the Lord's scattered flock, that under Christ we may all be united in the same body. (Eph. iv. 11, 13.) In the world there is miserable dispersion, but in Christ there is (*ἀνακεφαλαίωσις*) "a gathering together" of all, (Eph. i. 10,) as the Apostle speaks; for there can be no other bond of union. As to the word "create," or "form," it is to no purpose that some men speculate about it as relating to Christ's human existence, which was created; for it is clearer than noon-day, that the "forming" must be viewed as relating to office.

And though Israel be not gathered. The Jews read these words as a question: "Shall I not bring back Jacob? and shall Israel not be gathered?" and supply the particle ה (*hă*). But that reading is excessively unnatural, and the Jews do not consider what was the Prophet's meaning, but, so far as lies in their power, corrupt the text, in order to conceal the disgrace of their nation. Some explain it, "Shall not be lost," or, "Shall not perish;" for the verb אָסַף (*ăsăph*) sometimes denotes what we commonly call (*trousser*) *to truss.* Those things which are intended to be preserved are "gathered," and likewise those things which are intended to be consumed; and accordingly, when we mean that any person has been removed out of the world, we frequently use the vulgar phrase, "he is trussed,"[1] or, "he is despatched."

[1] The idiomatic use of "trousser," bears a strong resemblance to the

Yet I shall be glorious. To suppose the meaning to be, "I have been sent, that Israel may not perish," would not be unsuitable; but I choose rather to follow a different interpretation, namely, "Though Israel be not gathered, yet I shall be glorious;" for it is probable that opposite things are contrasted with each other in this passage. If ministers have been set apart for the salvation of men, it is glorious to them when many are brought to salvation; and when the contrary happens, it tends to their shame and disgrace. Paul calls those whom he had gained to Christ "his glory and crown." (Philip. iv. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 19.) On the other hand, when men perish, we receive from it nothing but shame and disgrace; for God appears to curse our labours, and not to deign to bestow on us the high honour of advancing his kingdom by our agency. But the Prophet declares that those who have served Christ shall nevertheless be glorious; for he speaks both of the Head and of the members, as we have formerly remarked. Although therefore Israel refuse to be "gathered," yet the ministry of Christ shall retain its glory unimpaired; for it will be ascribed to the baseness and wickedness of men, that they have not been "gathered."

In like manner, although the preachers of the Gospel be "the savour of death unto death" to the reprobate, yet Paul declares that they have a sweet and delightful odour before God, who determines that wicked men shall thus be rendered the more inexcusable. God is indeed doubly glorified if success corresponds to their wishes; but when the ministers of the word have left nothing undone, though they have good reason to lament that their labour is unprofitable, still they must not repent of having pleased God, whose approbation is here contrasted with the perverse judgments of the whole world. As if the Prophet had said, "Though men vehemently slander and load them with many reproaches, yet this ought to be calmly and patiently endured by them; because

idioms of the Italian and English languages. Thus, "trousser baggage," —"far fagotto,"—"to pack up one's baggage." Again, "trousser un homme,"—"spacciare per le poste all' altro mondo,"—"to despatch him post haste into the other world."—*Ed.*

God judges differently, and bestows a crown of honour on their patience, which wicked men insolently slander.

And my God shall be my strength. When he says that it is enough that "God is their strength," the meaning corresponds to what goes before, that they ought not to be terrified by the multitude or power of their enemies, seeing that they are persuaded that their "strength" lies in God.

6. *And he said, It is a small matter.* Isaiah proceeds still farther, and shews that the labour of Christ, and of the whole Church, will be glorious not only before God, but likewise before men. Although at first it appears to be vain and useless, yet the Lord will cause some fruit to spring from it contrary to the expectations of men. Already it was enough that our labour should be approved by God; but when he adds that it will not be unprofitable even in the eyes of men, this ought still more abundantly to comfort, and more vehemently to excite us. Hence it follows, that we ought to have good hopes of success, but that we ought to leave it to the disposal of God himself, that the blessing which he promises may be made manifest at the proper time, to whatever extent, and in whatever manner he shall think proper.

Therefore I have appointed thee to be a light of the Gentiles. He now adds, that this labour will be efficacious, not only among the people of Israel, but likewise among the Gentiles; and so it actually happened. Moreover, when the preaching of the Gospel produced hardly any good effect on the Jews, and when Christ was obstinately rejected by them, the Gentiles were substituted in their room. And thus Christ was "appointed to be a light of the Gentiles, and his salvation was manifested to the very ends of the earth." (Acts xiii. 47.) Now this consolation was highly necessary, both for prophets and for apostles, who experienced more and more the obstinacy of the Jews. They might doubt the truth of these promises, since they did not perceive them to yield any fruit; but when they understood that Christ was sent to the Gentiles also, it was not so difficult to animate their hearts to persevere. This was incredible, and even monstrous; but this is the manner in which the Lord commonly works, contrary to the expectation of all. Paul says that

this was "a mystery hidden from ages," and that the angels themselves did not understand it until it was actually revealed in the Church of God. (Eph. iii. 5.) Although therefore the Jews alone appeared to have discernment, they are now placed on a level with the Gentiles, and with God "there is no distinction between the Jews and the Greeks." (Rom. x. 12.)

The Jews read this verse as a question, "Is it a small thing?" As if he had said, that it is enough, and that nothing more or greater ought to be desired. But they maliciously corrupt the natural meaning of the Prophet, and imagine that they will one day be lords of the Gentiles, and will have wide and extensive dominion. The true meaning of the Prophet is, "This work in itself indeed is magnificent and glorious, to raise up and restore the tribes of Israel, which had fallen very low; for he will add the Gentiles to the Jews, that they may be united as one people, and may be acknowledged to belong to Christ." Nor does this passage relate to the rejection of the ancient people, but to the increase of the Church, that the Gentiles may be associated with the Jews. It is true, indeed, that when the Jews revolted from the covenant, the Gentiles entered, as it were, into that place which they had left vacant; and thus their revolt was the reason why those who had formerly been aliens were admitted to be sons. But in this, as well as in other passages, Isaiah foretells that the Church will be greatly extended, when the Gentiles shall be received and united to the Jews in the unity of faith.

A light of the Gentiles. Although by the word "light" is meant happiness, or joy, yet the Prophet, I have no doubt, directly refers to the doctrine of the Gospel, which enlightens souls, and draws them out of darkness. He shews that this "light," which Christ shall bring, will give salvation. In the same manner as Christ is called "the way, the truth, and the life," (John xiv. 6,) because through the knowledge of the truth we obtain life, so in this passage he is called the "light" and salvation of the Gentiles, because he enlightens our minds by the doctrine of the Gospel, in order that he may lead us to salvation. Two things, therefore,

ought to be remarked; first, that our eyes are opened by the doctrine of Christ; and secondly, that we who had perished are restored to life, or rather life is restored to us.

7. *Thus saith Jehovah.* Isaiah pursues the same subject, that the people, when they were afflicted by that terrible calamity, might cherish the hope of a better condition; and, in order to confirm it the more, he calls God, who promised these things, *the Redeemer and the Holy One of Israel.* It will be objected that these statements are contradictory, that is, that God is called the "Redeemer" of that people which he permitted to be oppressed; for where is this redemption, and where is this sanctification, if the people could reply that they were miserable and ruined? I reply, the record of ancient history is here exhibited as the ground of confidence and hope; for when the Jews were on the point of despair, the Prophet comes forward and reminds them that God, who had formerly redeemed their fathers, is still as powerful as ever; and therefore, although for a time, in order to exercise the faith of the godly, he concealed their salvation, believers are commanded to stand firm, because in his hand their redemption is certain. Yet it was proper that they should form conceptions of that which lay far beyond human senses. This is a remarkable passage, from which we learn how firmly we ought to believe God when he speaks, though he does not immediately perform what he has promised, but permits us to languish, and to be afflicted for a long time.

To the contemptible in the soul. בּוּזֹה (*bězō*) is rendered by some commentators "contempt," and by others "contemptible," which I prefer.[1] It heightens the wretchedness of that nation, that "in the soul," that is, in their own estimation, they are "contemptible." Many are despised by others, though they either deserve honour on account of their good qualities, or do not cease to swell with pride, and to tread down the arrogance of others by still greater arrogance. But of this people the Prophet says, that they despise

[1] "בּוּזֹה (*bězo*) has been variously explained as an infinitive, a passive participle, and an adjective in the construct state, which last is adopted by Gessenius and most later writers."—*Alexander.*

themselves as much as others despise them. He therefore describes deep disgrace and a very unhappy condition, and, at the same time, prostration of mind, that they may know that God's time for rendering assistance will be fully come, when they shall be altogether humbled.

To the abhorred nation.[1] I see no reason why the plural "Nations," is here employed by some interpreters; seeing that the singular גּוֹי, (*gōi*,) "nation," is used by the Prophet, and it is certain that the discourse is specially directed to the posterity of Abraham.

To the servant of rulers. This is added, as if he had said that they are oppressed by strong tyrants; for he gives the appellation מֹשְׁלִים (*mōshĕlīm*) to those whose strength and power are so great that it is not easy to escape out of their hands.

When he says that *kings shall see*, he speaks in lofty terms of the deliverance of his nation; but yet he permits them to be put to the test in the furnace, that he may make trial of their faith and patience; for otherwise there would be no trial of their faith, if he immediately performed what he promised, as we have already said. The word *princes* contains a repetition which is customary among the Hebrews. We would express it thus: "Kings and princes shall see; they shall rise up and adore." By the word *adore*, he explains what he had said, "They shall rise up;" for we "rise up" for the purpose of shewing respect. The general meaning is, that the most exalted princes of the world shall be aroused to perceive that the restoration of the nation is an illustrious work of God, and worthy of reverence.

For faithful is the Holy One of Israel. This is the reason of the great admiration and honour which the princes shall render to God. It is because they shall perceive the "faithfulness" and constancy of the Lord in his promises. Now,

[1] "'Whom the nation abhorreth, who abhorreth the nation, who excites the abhorrence of the nation, the nation which excites abhorrence,'—all these are passable translations of the Hebrew words, among which interpreters choose according to their different views respecting the whole passage. In any case it is descriptive of deep debasement and general contempt, to be exchanged hereafter for an opposite condition."—*Alexander.*

the Lord wishes to be acknowledged to be true, not by a bare and naked imagination, but by actual experience, that is, by preserving the people whom he has adopted. Let us therefore learn from it, that we ought not to judge of the promises of God from our condition, but from his truth; so that, when we shall see nothing before us but destruction and death, we may remember this sentiment, by which the Lord calls to himself the contemptible and abominable.

Hence also it ought to be observed, how splendid and astonishing a work of God is the deliverance of the Church, which compels kings, though proud, and deeming hardly anything so valuable as to be worthy of their notice, to behold, admire, and be amazed, and even in spite of themselves to reverence the Lord. This strange and extraordinary work, therefore, is highly commended to us. How great and how excellent it is, we may learn from ourselves; for to say nothing about ancient histories, in what manner have we been redeemed from the wretched tyranny of Antichrist? Truly we shall consider it to be "a dream," as the Psalmist says, (Ps. cxxvi. 1,) if we ponder it carefully for a short time; so strange and incredible is the work which God hath performed in us who have possessed the name of Christ.

And who hath chosen thee. He now repeats what he had formerly glanced at, that this nation has been set apart to God. But in election we perceive the beginning of sanctification; for it was in consequence of God having deigned to elect them out of his mere good pleasure, that this nation became his peculiar inheritance. Isaiah therefore points out the secret will of God, from which sanctification proceeds; that Israel might not think that he had been selected on account of his own merits. As if he had said, "The Lord, who hath chosen thee, gives actual proof of his election, and shows it by the effect. In the same manner, therefore, as the truth of God ought to be acknowledged in our salvation, so salvation ought to be ascribed exclusively to his election, which is of free grace. Yet they who wish to become partakers of so great a benefit, must be a part of Israel, that is, of the Church, out of which there can be neither salvation nor truth.

8. *In a time of good pleasure.* From this verse we again learn more clearly what we explained at the beginning of this chapter, that the Prophet, while he addresses the whole body of the Church, begins with Christ, who is the Head. I have said that this ought to be carefully observed; for commentators have not attended to it, and yet there is no other way in which this chapter can be consistently expounded. This is clearly shewn by Paul, who applies this statement to the whole Church. (2 Cor. vi. 2.) And yet what the Prophet adds, *I will give thee to be a covenant,* is applicable to no other than Christ.

How shall we reconcile these statements? By considering that Christ is not so much his own as ours; for he neither came, nor died, nor rose again for himself. He was sent for the salvation of the Church, and seeks nothing as his own; for he has no want of anything. Accordingly, God makes promises to the whole body of the Church. Christ, who occupies the place of Mediator, receives these promises, and does not plead on behalf of himself as an individual, but of the whole Church, for whose salvation he was sent. On this account he does not address Christ separately, but so far as he is joined and continually united to his body. It is an inconceivable honour which our Heavenly Father bestows upon us, when he listens to his Son on our account, and when he even directs the discourse to the Son, while the matter relates to our salvation. Hence we see how close is the connection between us and Christ. He stands in our room, and has nothing separate from us; and the Father listens to our cause.

By the word "good pleasure," the Prophet lays a bridle on believers, so to speak, that they may not be too eager in their desires, but may wait patiently till the time appointed by God has arrived; and in this sense Paul gives to the coming of Christ the appellation of "the time of fulness." (Gal. iv. 4.) He means, therefore, that they depend on God's disposal, and ought therefore to endure his wrath with meekness and composure. But although the intention of the Prophet is to exhort the godly to patience, that they may learn to place their feelings in subordination to God,

yet at the same time he shows that our salvation proceeds from God's undeserved kindness. רָצוֹן, (*rātzōn*,) which the Greeks translate εὐδοκία, that is, the good-will of God is the foundation of our salvation; and salvation is the effect of that grace. We are saved, because we please God, not through our worthiness or merits, but by his free grace. Secondly, he shows, at the same time, that our salvation is certain, when we have a clear proof of the grace of the Lord. All doubt ought to be removed, when the Lord testified of his "good pleasure." This passage tends to the commendation of the word, beyond which we ought not to inquire about salvation; as Paul declares that the good pleasure of God is clearly manifested in the preaching of the Gospel, and that thus is fulfilled what is contained in this passage about "the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

Thirdly, the Prophet intended to remind us, that God gives us an undoubted pledge of his favour when he sends the Gospel to us; because it is evident that he has compassion upon us, when he gently invites us to himself, that we may not look around in every direction to seek this light, which ought to be expected only from God's gracious pleasure, or be tortured by doubt, from which God frees us. But let us remember that all this depends on God's free purpose. When therefore the question is put, why the Lord enlightened us at this time rather than at an earlier period, the reason which ought to be assigned is this: because thus it pleased God, thus it seemed good in his sight. Such is the conclusion to which Paul comes in the passage which we quoted, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

This passage may greatly aid us in ascertaining Isaiah's meaning, that we may learn to connect our salvation with God's good pleasure; a proof of which is given to us in the preaching of the Gospel. It ought also to be observed, that these predictions should not be limited to a certain age, since they belong to the whole Church in all ages. For if we begin with the deliverance from Babylon, we must go on to the redemption of Christ, of which it might be regarded as the commencement and the forerunner; and since there

are still found among us many remnants of slavery, we must proceed forward to the last day, when everything shall be restored.

I have appointed thee to be a covenant. This makes it still more evident, that all that had formerly been said was promised to Christ, not for the sake of his personal advantage, but on our behalf; for he has been appointed to be the Mediator of the covenant, because the Jews by their sins had revolted from God, who had made an everlasting covenant with them. The renewal of that covenant, therefore, which had been broken or dissolved, is ascribed to Christ. Yet we must likewise keep in view the saying of Paul, that "Christ is our peace, to reconcile both them that are far off, and them that are near." (Eph. ii. 14, 17.) But Isaiah had directly in view that lamentable ruin, the remedy for which could be expected from Christ alone. Besides, it is proper to apply this grace to ourselves, because, as compared to the Jews, before the Gospel was preached, we were enemies and aliens from God, and could not in any other way be reconciled to him. Christ was therefore "given to be a covenant of the people," because there was no other way to God but by him. At that time the Jews were a people; but in consequence of the partition-wall having been broken down, all of us, both Jews and Gentiles, have been united in one body.

That thou mayest raise up the earth, which at that time was waste and desolate; for the return of the people was, as we have elsewhere seen, a kind of new creation. Such is also the design of the words of the Prophet, that we may know that there is nothing in the world but ruin and desolation. Christ is sent in order to restore what was fallen down and decayed. If we had not been in a fallen condition, there would have been no reason why Christ should be sent to us. We ought therefore to weigh well our condition; for we are aliens from God, destitute of life, and shut out from all hope of salvation. But by Christ we are fully restored and reconciled to our Heavenly Father. Isaiah likewise adds the benefits which we obtain through Christ, after having been reconciled to God.

9. *That thou mayest say to them that are bound.* These words describe the change which took place at the coming of Christ. And yet the Prophet unquestionably intends to administer consolation to the Jews in their extremity, that they may not think it incredible that they shall be restored to a better condition, because they see that they are almost devoted to destruction. Still, he shows in general what is the nature of Christ's office, and explains what is meant by *restoring desolate heritages;* for, before the coming of Christ, we are "bound" under a miserable yoke, and plunged in darkness. By these metaphors is meant, that so long as we are without Christ, we are overwhelmed by a load of all evils; for by *darkness* he excludes everything that relates to the kingdom of Christ, faith, righteousness, truth, innocence, and everything of that nature. We are therefore in "darkness," till Christ say, *Shew yourselves.* We are "bound," till he say, *Come, forth.*

The word לֵאמֹר, (*lēmōr,*) "that thou mayest say," is highly emphatic; for it shews that the preaching of the Gospel is the means by which we are delivered. If therefore we desire liberty, if we desire the light of the kingdom of God, let us listen to Christ when he speaks; otherwise we shall be oppressed by the unceasing tyranny of Satan. Where then is the liberty of our will? Whosoever claims for himself light, or reason, or understanding, can have no share in this deliverance of Christ; for liberty is not promised to any but those who acknowledge that they are captives, and light and salvation are not promised to any but those who acknowledge that they are plunged in darkness.

On the ways they shall feed. When he promises that pastures shall be accessible to the children of God, and shall be on the tops of the mountains, by these metaphors he declares that all who shall be under the protection of Christ shall dwell safely; for he is a careful and attentive Shepherd, who supplies his flock with everything that is necessary, so that they are in want of nothing that is requisite for the highest happiness. (John x. 11.) This instruction was highly necessary at the time when the Jews were about to perform a journey through dry and barren countries, in their return

to a land which lay waste and desolate. The Prophet therefore says that God has abundant resources for supplying their wants, though earthly means should fail; and accordingly, in accordance with the ordinary custom of Scripture, he compares believers to sheep, in order that, being aware of their weakness, they may commit themselves entirely to the care of the Shepherd.

Yet it is probable that indirectly he warns believers not to desire excessive luxury, because they will never have so great superfluity as not to be attended by many difficulties; and likewise not to become effeminate, because they will be beset by dangers; for we know that "the ways" are exposed to the attacks of enemies and robbers, and that the tops of mountains are for the most part barren. The Church is governed by Christ in such a manner as not to be free from the attacks and insults of men, and is fed in such a manner as frequently to inhabit barren and frightful regions. But though enemies are at hand, God protects us from their violence and oppression. If we are thirsty or hungry, he is abundantly able to supply everything that is necessary for food and maintenance; and amidst perils and difficulties of this nature we perceive his care and anxiety more clearly than if we were placed beyond the reach of all danger.

10. *They shall not hunger or thirst.* He confirms what was said in the former verse, that there is food in the hand of God, so that the Jews shall not be in want of provisions for their journey. Nor can it be doubted that he calls to their remembrance, that when their fathers were threatened with death in the wilderness through a scarcity of bread and of every kind of food, God gave them daily, for forty years, manna from heaven. (Exod. xvi. 35.) In like manner, when he immediately afterwards speaks of a shadow against *the heat of the sun*, he alludes to the history related by Moses about "the pillar of a cloud," by which God protected his people from being scorched by the burning rays of the sun. (Exod. xiii. 21.) We have said that it is customary with the prophets to mention the departure of the people out of Egypt, whenever they intend to demonstrate the

kindness of God, either publicly towards all, or privately towards any individual.

By the fountains of waters. He likewise alludes to those waters which flowed from the rock, (Exod. xvii. 6,) when the people had well-nigh perished from thirst; for those occurrences did not take place at the deliverance from Babylon, but, by mentioning former benefits, the Prophet magnifies the power of God in securing the safety of the Church.

11. *And I will place all my mountains.* Here he directly and expressly treats of the return of the people; for in vain would he have promised so great happiness to the Church, if the people were not to be restored to their former liberty. The meaning is, that he will remove every obstacle and hinderance that might prevent the return of the people; and that he will render the "mountains" passable, which appeared to be impassable; and, in short, that he will level both the mountains and the valleys, that their return to Judea may be facilitated. Thus, when the Church is about to be completely restored, no obstructions, however great and formidable, can hinder God from being finally victorious. Besides, when he calls them "*my* mountains," he not only means that he has an absolute right to command them to afford a passage to his people, but declares that he will be the leader of the expedition, as if he would march along with the Jews, and accompany them in the journey. In like manner, it is said in another passage, that he passed through Egypt and "rode on the high places of it" at the departure of his people. (Deut. xxxii. 13.) But here he describes the extraordinary love of God towards the Church, when he says that he travels along with her, and undertakes to supply all her wants, as if he were consulting his own interests when he assisted his people.

12. *Behold, those from afar shall come.* The opinion entertained by some, that the four quarters of the earth are here denoted, does not rest on very solid grounds; yet I do not reject it, because it not only is probable, but agrees with many other passages. Undoubtedly, he first says that they shall come from distant parts of the world, and next adds

certain subdivisions or parts in order to explain this general statement.

And those from the land of Sinis. Instead of "Sinis," some read "Sinim;" and indeed the Hebrew copies differ.[1] Jerome thinks (and this is the commonly received opinion) that a southern region is so denominated from Mount Sinai, which lay toward the south. Others think that "Syene" is meant, because it lies under the tropic of Cancer.[2] But this diversity has nothing to do with the meaning of the Prophet, which of itself is clear and easy to be understood; for the Prophet unquestionably means those who had been scattered and dispersed in various places, whether they are collected from the north or from the sea. While Isaiah promises a return from Babylon, he at the same time extends this prediction to the time of Christ, as may be easily learned from what goes before; for we must keep in remembrance what we formerly said, that the second birth of the Church is here described. Not only does he promise that the Jews shall return to Jerusalem to build the temple, but likewise that they who had formerly been aliens from the Church, shall be collected from every corner of the world.

13. *Praise, O heavens; and rejoice, O earth.* Though he exhorts and encourages all the godly to thanksgiving, yet he likewise aims at confirming the promise which might have been regarded as doubtful; for afflictions trouble our consciences, and cause them to waver in such a manner that it is not so easy to rest firmly on the promises of God. In short, men either remain in suspense, or tremble, or utterly fall and even faint. So long as they are oppressed by fear

[1] The resemblance of (ס) Samech to (ם) final Mem partly accounts for the difference of the readings.—*Ed.*

[2] "Various interpretations have been given of this name, both in ancient and modern times. The Targum and Vulgate understand it of some land in the far south; the Septuagint supposes it to be Persia; Jerome, Jarchi, and Grotius, misled by similarity of sound, refer it to the wilderness of Sin and Mount Sinai. Others refer it to Egypt, as if that country were so named, either from Sin, or Syene. Others, with higher probability, understand 'Sinim' to be China."—*Eadie's Cyclopædia.* "From the north—Tartary; west, Europe; Sinim, the Chinese, in whose country a multitude of Jews lie hid, if we may believe the curious account of them, published by the Jesuit Brotier, in his supplement to Tacit. Hist. l. v."—*Stock.*

or anxiety, or grief, they scarcely accept of any consolation; and therefore they need to be confirmed in various ways. This is the reason why Isaiah describes the advantages of this deliverance in such lofty terms, in order that believers, though they beheld nothing around them but death and ruin, might sustain their heart by the hope of a better condition. Accordingly, he places the subject almost before their eyes, that they may be fully convinced that they shall have the most abundant cause of rejoicing; though at that time they saw nothing but grief and sorrow.

Let us therefore remember, that whenever the Lord promises anything, we ought to add thanksgiving, that we may more powerfully affect our hearts; and next, that we ought to raise our minds to the power of God, who exercises a wide and extensive dominion over all the creatures; for as soon as he lifts his hand, "heaven and earth" are moved. If the tokens of his wonderful power are to be seen everywhere, he intends that there shall be an eminent and remarkable example of it in the salvation of the Church.

And he will have compassion on his poor. By this metaphor the Prophet shews that no obedience which is rendered to God by heaven and earth is more acceptable to him than to join together and lend their mutual aid to his Church. Moreover, that believers may not faint under the weight of distresses, before promising to them consolation from God, he exhorts them calmly to bear distresses; for by the word *poor* he means that the Church, in this world, is liable to many calamities. In order, therefore, that we may partake of the compassion of God, let us learn, under the cross and amidst many annoyances, to strive after it with sighs and tears.

14. *But Zion said, Jehovah hath forsaken me.* In order to magnify his grace the more, God complains that the hearts of the Jews were so narrow and close, that the road was almost shut against him, if he had not overcome their wicked thoughts by his great goodness. Yet at the same time he endeavours to correct this fault, that the deliverance which is offered, and, as it were, set before them, may be received by them with open hearts, and that, as he is willing to assist

them, so they, on the other hand, may be prepared to cherish favourable hopes. Now, to us also this doctrine belongs; because almost all of us, when God delays his assistance, are fearfully distressed and tormented; for we think that he has forsaken and rejected us. Thus despair quickly creeps in, which must be opposed, that we may not be deprived of the grace of God. And indeed amidst these doubts our unbelief is manifested and exposed, by our not relying on the promises of God, so as to bear patiently either the chastisements by which God urges us to repentance, or the trials of faith by which he trains us to patience, or any afflictions by which he humbles us. Justly therefore does God remonstrate with the Jews for rejecting by wicked distrust the salvation offered to them, and not permitting themselves to receive assistance. Nor does he limit this accusation to a small number, but includes nearly the whole Church, in order to shew that he will be kind and bountiful toward the Jews beyond the measure of their faith, and that he even strives with them, that by his salvation he may break through all the hinderances by which they opposed him. Let each of us therefore beware of indulging or flattering ourselves in this matter; for the Lord contends with the whole Church, for uttering speeches of this kind, which proceed from the fountain of distrust.

15. *Shall a woman forget her child!* In order to correct that distrust, he adds to the remonstrance an exhortation full of the sweetest consolation. By an appropriate comparison, he shews how strong is his anxiety about his people, comparing himself to a mother, whose love toward her offspring is so strong and ardent, as to leave far behind it a father's love. Thus he did not satisfy himself with proposing the example of a father, (which on other occasions he very frequently employs,) but in order to express his very strong affection, he chose to liken himself to a mother, and calls them not merely "children," but *the fruit of the womb*, towards which there is usually a warmer affection. What amazing affection does a mother feel toward her offspring, which she cherishes in her bosom, suckles on her breast, and watches over with tender care, so that she passes sleepless

nights, wears herself out by continued anxiety, and forgets herself! And this carefulness is manifested, not only among men, but even among savage beasts, which, though they are by nature cruel, yet in this respect are gentle.

Even if they shall forget. Since it does sometimes happen that mothers degenerate into such monsters as to exceed in cruelty the wild beasts and forget "the fruit of their womb," the Lord next declares that, even though this should happen, still he will never forget his people. The affection which he bears toward us is far stronger and warmer than the love of all mothers. We ought also to bear in mind the saying of Christ, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more your heavenly Father?" (Matt. vii. 11.) Men, though by nature depraved and addicted to self-love, are anxious about their children. What shall God do, who is goodness itself? Will it be possible for him to lay aside a father's love? Certainly not. Although therefore it should happen that mothers (which is a monstrous thing) should forsake their own offspring, yet God, whose love toward his people is constant and unremitting, will never forsake them. In a word, the Prophet here describes to us the inconceivable carefulness with which God unceasingly watches over our salvation, that we may be fully convinced that he will never forsake us, though we may be afflicted with great and numerous calamities.

16. *Behold, on the palms of my hands.* By another comparison he describes that inconceivable carefulness which the Lord exercises toward us. It is a common proverb, that "we have it on our fingers' ends," when we have anything fully and deeply fixed on our memory. And Moses when he recommends constant meditation on the Law, says, "Thou shalt bind them for a sign on thy hand;" that is, that they should always have the commandments of God placed before their eyes. (Deut. vi. 8.) He now makes use of the same comparison; as if he had said, "I cannot look at my hands without beholding thee in them; I carry thee engraved on my heart, so that no forgetfulness can efface thee; in a word, I cannot forget thee without forgetting myself." True, indeed, God has neither hands nor bodily shape; but Scripture

accommodates itself to our weak capacity so as to express the strength of God's love toward us.

Thy walls are continually before me. As the Church is frequently called the "habitation" or "city of God," (and hence also the metaphor of "building" (Ps. cii. 16; Jer. xxiv. 6; Matt. xvi. 18) is frequently employed in Scripture,) so he makes use of the figurative term "walls," by which he denotes the peace and prosperity of the Church; as if he had said that he would take care that Jerusalem should thrive and flourish. Yet it ought to be observed that the term "walls" denotes proper order of policy and discipline, of which God declares that he will be the ceaseless and unwearied guardian. Let us remember that this prophecy was accomplished during that frightful desolation, when the "walls" of Jerusalem, which were a lively image of the Church, had been cast down, the temple overthrown, and government overturned, and, in a word, when everything had been destroyed and nearly razed to the foundation; for immediately afterwards he promises that they shall all be restored.

17. *Thy builders hasten.* He affirms what had been briefly stated in the former verse; for it might have been thought that there was no ground for what he had now asserted about the unceasing care which God takes of his Church and of her walls, which he permits to be razed to their foundations, and therefore he adds the explanation, that it will indeed be thrown down, but will afterwards be built anew. *Builders.* From this word we may learn what is the true method of restoring the Church, namely, if the Lord send "builders"[1] to rear it, and next if he *drive far away the destroyers* who demolish it. Though God could, by himself, and without the aid of men, rebuild the Church, yet he deigns to employ their hands; and although he alone, by the secret influence of his Spirit, completes this whole building, yet he blesses their labour, that it may not be useless. From him, therefore, we ought to ask and look for builders; for it belongs to him to render them "sufficient," as Paul also informs us, (2 Cor. iii. 5,) and to assign to each his department.

[1] "Maistres charpentiers et massons." "Master carpenters and masons."

We ought also to pray not only that he may "send forth labourers into his harvest," (Matt. ix. 38,) but that he may recruit their strength and efficaciously direct them, so that they may not labour in vain; for, when the doctrine of the Gospel is preached with any advantage, it arises from his extraordinary goodness. But even this would not be enough, if he did not "drive destroyers far away;" for Satan, by innumerable arts, invades and assails the Church, and is in no want of servants and attendants, who direct their whole energy to destroy, or spoil, or hinder the Lord's building. We ought, therefore, constantly to entreat that he would ward off their attacks; and if the result be not entirely according to our expectations, let us blame our own sins and ingratitude; for the Lord was ready to bestow those blessings abundantly upon us.

18. *Lift up thine eyes round about.* He arouses the Church to survey this magnificent work, as if it were actually before her eyes, and to behold the multitudes of men who shall flock into it from every quarter. Now, as this assemblage must have encouraged godly hearts during the dispersion, so they who were eye-witnesses must have been excited to gratitude. This shews clearly that this prediction was useful at both periods, not only while the event was still concealed by hope, but when it had been actually accomplished. Though he speaks to the whole Church at large, yet this discourse relates also to individuals, that all with one accord, and each person separately, may embrace these promises.

When he bids them "lift up their eyes," he means that the reason why we are so much cast down is, that we do not examine the Lord's work with due attention, but have a vail placed, as it were, before our eyes, to hinder us from seeing what lies at our feet. In consequence of this, we do not cherish any confidence, but in adversity are almost overwhelmed by despair. And if these things are said to the whole Church, let every man consider in his own heart how far he is chargeable with this vice, and let him forthwith arouse and awaken himself to behold the works of the Lord, that he may rely with all his heart on his promises.

All are gathered together. When he says that the elect of the Church are "gathered together," he means that, in order to their becoming one body under Christ, and, as it were, "one fold under one shepherd," (John x. 16,) they must be, if we may so express it, "gathered" into one bosom. Christ reckons and treats as his followers none but those who are joined in one body by unity of faith. Whoever then shall choose to be regarded as belonging to the number of the children of God, let him be a son of the Church; for all who are separated from it will be aliens from God.

Thou shalt be clothed as with an ornament. The Prophet shews what is the true ornament of the Church, namely, to have a great number of children, who are brought to her by faith and guided by the Spirit of God. This is true splendour; this is the glory of the Church, which must be filthy and ugly, ragged and dishevelled, if she have not these ornaments. Hence we see how well the Papists understand what is the true manner in which the Church ought to be adorned; for their whole attention is given to painted tables, to statues, to fine buildings, to gold, precious stones, and costly garments; that is, they give their whole attention to puppets, like children. But the true dignity of the Church is internal, so far as it consists of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and of progressive faith and piety. Hence it follows, that she is richly provided with her ornaments, when the people, joined together by faith, are gathered into her bosom, to worship God in a proper manner.

I live, saith Jehovah.[1] In order that this promise may be more certain, the Lord employs an oath, which is intended to warn us against distrust, and that, when we shall consider that her end is near, we may be certain that she shall be fully restored. And if this doctrine was ever necessary, it is especially necessary at the present time; for, wherever we turn our eyes, we meet with nothing but frightful desolation.

[1] "חי־אני (*chāī ănī*) 'I the Living One,' is here, as in many other passages, the form of an oath, employed both by God and by men; and the meaning of it is: 'as truly as I live, so certainly will I perform this or that, and this or that event shall happen.' The particle כי (*kī*) here denotes the object of the oath, and is equivalent to ὅτι in Greek after the verbs ὀμνύω, λέγω,' &c."—*Rosenmüller.*

What then must we do, but, relying on this oath of God, struggle against despair, and not be terrified by our being inconsiderable in number, which makes us despised by the world, and not doubt that there are many of the elect, now wandering and scattered, whom God will at length assemble into his Church? And therefore we ought to encourage our hearts, and to lift up our eyes by faith, that we may extend our hope not only to a single age, but to the most distant period.

19. *For thy desolate places.* He confirms by other words what we have already seen, that the change which he promised is in the hand of God, that the Church, which was for a long time waste and desolate, may speedily have many inhabitants; so that the place may be too narrow to contain them all. He employs the metaphor of a ruinous city, whose walls and houses are rebuilt, to which the citizens return in such vast numbers that its circumference must be enlarged, because its former extent cannot contain them all. Thus he means not only the return of the people from Babylon, but the restoration which was effected through Christ; that is, when the Church was spread far and wide, not only throughout Judea, but throughout the whole world.

And thy destroyers shall remove far away. He adds that a garrison will be provided, if any enemies shall molest her; yea, that she shall be secure against their attacks and molestation, because God will "drive them far away." Not that the Church shall ever enjoy perfect peace, and be secured against all the attacks of enemies; but yet God, bearing with the weakness of his people, defended them from wicked men, and restrained or warded off their attacks, so that at least the kingdom of Satan might not grow out of the ruins of the Church.

20. *Shall again say in thine ears.* Isaiah continues the same subject, and, under a different metaphor, promises the restoration of the Church. He compares her to a widowed or rather a barren mother, in order to describe her wretched and distressful condition; for she was overwhelmed by so many distresses, that the remembrance of the nation appeared to have wholly perished. Mingled with the Babylonians,

who held her captive, she had almost passed into another body. We need not wonder, therefore, if he compares her to a barren mother; for she brought forth no more children. Formerly the Jews had enjoyed high prosperity; but the kingdom was ruined, and all their strength was decayed, and, in short, their name was almost extinguished, when they were led into captivity. He therefore promises that the Church shall be purified from her filthiness, and that she who is now solitary shall regain that condition which she formerly held. And this is included in the word *Again*, that they may not doubt that it is in the power of God to restore what he formerly gave, though it was withdrawn for a time.

The children of thy bereavement.[1] By "the children of bereavement" some suppose that orphan children are meant; but I cannot agree with this, for "bereavement" and "barrenness" refer rather to the person of the Church, and accordingly it is for the sake of amplification that he describes them to be those who, contrary to expectation, had been given to her who was bereaved and barren.

Make room for me; that is, "withdraw for my benefit." Not that it is proper for the godly to shut out their brethren or drive them from their place; but the Prophet has borrowed from familiar language a mode of expression fitted to declare that no inconvenience shall hinder many from desiring to be admitted and to have room made for them. Now, this happened, when the Lord collected innumerable persons out of the whole world; for suddenly, and contrary to the expectation of men, the Church, which had formerly been empty, was filled; its boundaries were enlarged and extended far and wide.

21. *And thou shalt say in thy heart.* By these words he declares that the restoration of the Church, of which he now speaks, will be wonderful; and therefore he represents her as wondering and amazed on account of having been restored in a strange and unexpected manner. And truly a descrip-

[1] "בנים שהייתה שכולה מהם, (*bānīm shĕhāyīthāh shĕkūlāh mēhēm,*) 'the children of whom thou wast bereft.'"—*Jarchi.* "A city deprived of its inhabitants is compared to a mother bereft of her children."—*Rosenmüller.*

tion of this sort is not superfluous; for, as a new offspring grows up among men every day, by which the human race is propagated, so the children of God and of the Church are born, who, "not from flesh and blood," (John i. 13,) but by the secret power of God, are formed again to be new creatures. By nature we have no share in the kingdom of God;[1] and therefore, if any man contemplate this new and uncommon work, and in what manner the Church is increased and maintained, he will be constrained to wonder.

Who hath begotten me these? He shews that this astonishment will not be pretended, like expressions of this kind which frequently proceed from flatterers, but that it will come from "the heart;" for there will be good ground for wondering, that the Lord has preserved the Church amidst so great dangers, and has multiplied it by a new and unexpected offspring. Who would have thought that, at the time when the Jews were held in the greatest contempt, and were overwhelmed by every kind of reproaches and distresses, there would be any of the Gentiles who of their own accord desired to be associated with them? It was also in the highest degree improbable that the dispositions of men should be so suddenly changed as to adopt a religion which they had detested. Besides, the partition-wall which had been erected between them hindered all foreigners and uncircumcised persons from entering.

For I was bereaved (or *barren*) *and solitary.* She now explains what was the chief ground of that astonishment; namely, that formerly she brought forth no children, and was altogether destitute. Doctrine, which is the seed of spiritual life, by which the children of the Church are begotten, (1 Pet. i. 23,) had ceased; even the worship enjoined by the Law had been broken off; and, in short, everything that usually contributes to upholding the order of government had been taken away. Now, the Church is called *bereaved* or *barren*, not because God hath forsaken her, but because his presence is not always visible. We ourselves saw an image of that barrenness, when the Lord, in order to punish the ingratitude of men, took away his doctrine, and allowed

[1] "Nous n'avons aucune part au royaume de Dieu."

them to wander in darkness. The Church might truly be said to be "bereaved" and "barren," when none of her children were seen. Hence we ought to conclude how foolish the Papists are, who wish that Christ would always govern his Church so that it may never be "bereaved" or "barren;" seeing that the Lord, though he does not forsake the Church, yet very frequently, on account of the ingratitude of men, withdraws the tokens of his presence.

Who then hath brought up those? It is no easy matter for those who are led into captivity, and who often change their place and habitation, to "bring up" children; and when the law and the doctrine of piety no longer resounded in the temple, spiritual nourishment had almost entirely failed. But the Lord, who has no need of human aid, begets his children in an extraordinary manner, and by the astonishing power of his Spirit, and "brings them up" wherever he thinks proper; and in the fulfilment of this prediction, the Lord supplied them with nurses contrary to the expectation of all, so that it is not without reason that the Church wonders how they were reared. When we read this prophecy we are reminded that we ought not to be distressed beyond measure, if at any time we see the Church resemble a "bereaved" woman, and that we ought not to doubt that he can suddenly, or in a moment, raise up and restore her, though we perceive no means by which she can be restored.

22. *Thus saith the Lord Jehovah.* Isaiah confirms what he had said a little before, that the Lord would cause his Church, though for a very long time she had been "barren" and "bereaved," to have an exceedingly numerous offspring, and to be constrained to wonder at her own fruitfulness; and he does so, in order to remove all doubt which might have found its way into their hearts.

I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles. He declares that he will give children to the Church, not only from among the Jews, as formerly, but likewise from among "the Gentiles." And yet he indirectly asserts that this generation shall be spiritual through the grace of adoption; for the metaphor of a *banner* was intended to lead believers to expect a new kind of generation, and different from that which is seen in the ordinary

course of nature. The Lord must therefore set up a sign, and display his secret power through the Gospel,[1] that, out of nations who differed so widely from each other both in customs and in language, he might bring children to the Church, who should be united in the same faith, as brethren meet in their mother's bosom.

Those who think that, by the figurative terms *Hand* and *Banner*, nothing more than the preaching of the Gospel is meant, and who set aside the power of the Spirit, are mistaken; for both ought to be united, and the efficacy of the Spirit ought not to be separated from the preaching of the Gospel, as Paul clearly shews. (2 Cor. iii. 6.) To this "hand" of God, therefore, to this "banner" we must betake ourselves, when we see that the Church is oppressed by the tyranny of wicked men. Though every effort be made to overthrow and destroy it, the "hand" of God is higher, and in vain do men oppose him. He will at length subdue and crush their obstinacy, that the Church may obtain some repose in spite of all their exertions.

When he promises that the sons of the Church *shall be brought in her arms and on her shoulders*, the language is metaphorical, and means that God will find no difficulty, when he shall wish to gather the Church out of her dispersion; for all the Gentiles will assist him. Although this refers, in the first instance, to the Jews who had been banished and scattered, yet it undoubtedly ought to be extended to all the elect of God, who have become partakers of the same grace.

23. *And kings shall be thy nursing fathers.* After having spoken of the obedience of the Gentiles, he shews that this relates not to the common people only, but to "kings" also. He compares "kings" to hired men who bring up the children of others, and "queens" to "nurses," who give out their labour for hire. Why so? Because "kings" and "queens" shall supply everything that is necessary for nourishing the offspring of the Church. Having formerly driven out Christ from their dominions, they shall henceforth acknowledge him to be the supreme King, and shall render to him all honour, obedience, and worship. This took place when the

[1] Par la predication de l'Evangile." "By the preaching of the Gospel.'

Lord revealed himself to the whole world by the Gospel; for mighty kings and princes not only submitted to the yoke of Christ, but likewise contributed their riches to raise up and maintain the Church of Christ, so as to be her guardians and defenders.

Hence it ought to be observed that something remarkable is here demanded from princes, besides an ordinary profession of faith; for the Lord has bestowed on them authority and power to defend the Church and to promote the glory of God. This is indeed the duty of all; but kings, in proportion as their power is greater, ought to devote themselves to it more earnestly, and to labour in it more diligently. And this is the reason why David expressly addresses and exhorts them to "be wise, and serve the Lord, and kiss his Son." (Ps. ii. 10-12.)

This shews how mad are the dreams of those who assert that kings cannot be Christians without laying aside that office; for those things were accomplished under Christ, when kings, who had been converted to God by the preaching of the Gospel, obtained this highest pinnacle of rank, which surpasses dominion and principality of every sort, to be "nursing-fathers" and guardians of the Church. The Papists have no other idea of kings being "nursing-fathers" of the Church than that they have left to their priests and monks very large revenues, rich possessions and prebends, on which they might fatten, like hogs in a sty. But that "nursing" aims at an object quite different from filling up those insatiable gulfs. Nothing is said here about enriching the houses of those who, under false pretences, hold themselves out to be ministers of the Church, (which was nothing else than to corrupt the Church of God and to destroy it by deadly poison,) but about removing superstitions and putting an end to all wicked idolatry, about advancing the kingdom of Christ and maintaining purity of doctrine, about purging scandals and cleansing from the filth that corrupts piety and impairs the lustre of the Divine majesty.

Undoubtedly, while kings bestow careful attention on these things, they at the same time supply the pastors and ministers of the Word with all that is necessary for food and

maintenance, provide for the poor and guard the Church against the disgrace of pauperism; erect schools, and appoint salaries for the teachers and board for the students; build poor-houses and hospitals, and make every other arrangement that belongs to the protection and defence of the Church. But those unnecessary and extravagant expenses for Anniversaries and Masses, for golden vessels and costly robes, which swell the pride and insolence of Papists, serve only to uphold pomp and ambition, and corrupt the pure and simple "nursing" of the Church, and even choke and extinguish the seed of God, by which alone the Church lives. When we see that matters are now very different, and that "kings" are not the "nursing-fathers," but the executioners of the Church; when, in consequence of taking away the doctrine of piety and banishing its true ministers, idle bellies, insatiable whirlpools, and messengers of Satan, are fattened, (for such are the persons to whom the princes cheerfully distribute their wealth, that is, the moisture and blood which they have sucked out of the people;) when even princes otherwise godly have less strength and firmness for defending the Word and upholding the Church; let us acknowledge that this is the reward due to our sins, and let us confess that we do not deserve to have good "nursing-fathers." But yet, after this frightfully ruinous condition, we ought to hope for a restoration of the Church, and such a conversion of kings that they shall shew themselves to be "nursing-fathers" and protectors of believers, and shall bravely defend the doctrine of the Word.

And shall lick the dust of thy feet. This passage is also tortured by the Papists in order to uphold the tyranny of their idol, as if kings and princes had no other way of proving themselves to be sincere and lawful worshippers of God than by adoring that masked prince of the Church instead of God. Thus they consider the obedience of piety to consist in kissing the Pope's feet with deep reverence. What they ought to think of such barbarous and idolatrous worship, let them learn, first, from Peter, whose seat they boast of occupying, who would not permit such honour to be rendered to him by the centurion. (Acts x. 26.) Let them,

next, learn from Paul, who tore his garments, and rejected such worship with the utmost abhorrence. (Acts xiv. 14.) What could be more absurd than to imagine that the Son of God appointed, instead of a minister of the Gospel, an object of abhorrence, some king dazzling in Persian luxury and splendour? But let us remember that the Church, so long as she is a pilgrim in this world, is subjected to the cross, that she may be humble and may be conformed to her Head; that if her foes make any cessation of their hostility, still her highest ornament and lustre is modesty. Hence it follows, that she has laid aside her own attire, when she is clothed with irreligious pride.

Here the Prophet means nothing else than the adoration by which princes bow down before God, and the obedience which they render to his Word in the Church. What we have already said must be carefully observed, that, when we speak of rendering honour to the Church, she must never be separated from the Head; for this honour and worship belongs to Christ, and, when it is bestowed on the Church, it still continues to belong undivided to him alone. By the obedience of piety kings do not profess submission, so as to bear the yoke of men, but to yield to the doctrine of Christ. Whosoever therefore rejects the ministry of the Church, and refuses to bear the yoke which God wishes to lay with his own hand on all his people, can neither have any fellowship with Christ nor be a child of God.

For they shall not be ashamed. I consider אשר (*ăshĕr*) to be a conjunction signifying *For*;[1] and the clause to which it belongs is closely connected with what goes before, and has been improperly disjoined from it by some commentators. By this argument he proves that it is highly proper for princes to submit cheerfully to the government of God,

[1] "אשר לא יבישו קוי (*ăshĕr lō yēbōshū kōvāi*), 'of whom they that wait for me shall not be ashamed,' that is, 'whom Jehovah, they that wait for, they that trust in, shall not be ashamed.' When the Hebrews introduce any person speaking, the provisional affix, which comes after אשר (*ăshĕr*) and relates to that person, is commonly expressed by them in none but the first, that is, in the person of the speaker. For example, 'I am Joseph, אשר מכרתם אותי מצרימה, (*ăshĕr mĕkărtĕm ōthī mitzrāimāh,*) whom ye sold into Egypt.'"—*Rosenmüller.*

and not hesitate to humble themselves before the Church; because God will not suffer those who hope in him to "be ashamed." As if he had said, "This is a pleasant and delightful submission."

I am Jehovah. He connects his own truth with our salvation; as if he had said, that he does not wish men to acknowledge him to be true or to be God, unless he actually fulfil what he has promised. And hence we obtain inestimable advantage; for, as it is impossible that God should not continue to be the same, so the stability of our salvation, which the Prophet infers from God's own stability, must remain unshaken.

24. *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty?* Having solved, in the former verse, an objection which might occur to the mind of believers, he now confirms that solution still more; for it might have been thought incredible that the Jews should be rescued out of the hands of so powerful an enemy, by whom they had been taken in fair battle and reduced to slavery. He therefore adds this question as uttered by the whole of the common people, among whom it probably flew universally from mouth to mouth; and he immediately replies, as we shall see.

Shall the captivity of the righteous (or, *the righteous captivity*) *be delivered?* And we ought, first, to observe this metaphor, that the Church is called "the prey of the mighty" and "the captivity of the righteous," that is, lawful captivity. He is said to be the "righteous" possessor who is the lawful possessor; just as the prey, when the war has been righteous, passes into the hands of a righteous possessor.[1] Such was the condition of the ancient people, after having been driven into captivity; for, along with their native country, they had lost their liberty, and were entirely in the power, and at the disposal, of the conqueror. And yet we ought carefully to observe this metaphor, that the Church is oppressed by the tyranny of princes, and exposed to the jaws of wolves, and nevertheless is supposed to be their "just" prey. This

[1] "Quand la guerre est juste, celuy qui prend la proye est juste possesseur d'icelle." "When the war is righteous, he who takes the prey is the righteous possessor of it."

is, indeed, shamefully wicked; but thus were our fathers treated, and we are not more virtuous or more excellent than our fathers.

25. *The prey of the tyrant shall be delivered.* However they may boast of having a right to govern, and glory in an empty title, the Lord declares that they are most wicked robbers, when he threatens that he will be an avenger and will snatch their prey from them. God does not overturn just dominion; and hence it follows that the dominion which they usurped over the people of God is mere robbery and wicked tyranny. Neither their arms, nor their forces, nor their warlike preparations, shall hinder the Lord from taking out of their hands an unjust possession.

Nor does this promise relate only to outward enemies and tyrants, but also to the tyranny of Satan, from which we are rescued by the wonderful power of God. True indeed, he possesses vast power, but God is far more powerful, takes away his arms and demolishes his fortresses, that he may set us at liberty. (Matt. xii. 29; Luke xi. 22.) If therefore we have had experience of the power of God in this respect, so much the stronger reason have we for trusting that he will undoubtedly be our deliverer, whenever our enemies shall lay us under their feet and oppress us with cruel bondage.

I will contend with him that contendeth with thee. When he threatens that he will "contend" on our account, first, he reminds us to consider his power, that we may not regard the matter by human reason or by the power of men. We ought not therefore to look at what we can do or what resources we possess, but it is our duty to commit the whole matter to the disposal of God alone, who is graciously pleased to protect and defend us. Secondly, he affirms that he will be a powerful advocate, to reply to the slanders of enemies. We said, a little before, that wicked men not only are hurried along by violence and cruelty against the Church, but load her with false and calumnious charges, as if they had a right to treat her with cruelty; and therefore this consolation is highly necessary, that God will be the defender of our innocence, to scatter by his defence all the idle pretences which

strengthen the audacity and fierceness of wicked men. Accordingly he again repeats,—

I will save thy children. We derive great consolation from knowing that we are united with him by so close a bond that he sets himself in opposition to all who contend with us, "blesses those who bless us, and, on the other hand, curses those who curse us," and, in short, declares that he is the enemy of our enemies. (Gen. xii. 3.) Hence also it ought to be observed, that, when we are restored to liberty and life, when we are not oppressed by enemies, and, in short, when we are saved, it is not a work of man; that no one may ascribe to his own industry what God commands us to expect as an extraordinary blessing from himself alone.

26. *And I will feed thy oppressors with their own flesh.* First, he declares what is the nature of that end which awaits the enemies of the Church, and threatens that they shall not only be inflamed with mutual hatred, but shall likewise slay each other by mutual slaughter. And indeed it is God who drives them headlong, and rouses them to rage, so that they turn against themselves that strength which they formerly exerted against the Church, fight with each other, as the Midianites did, and bring destruction on themselves. (Judges vii. 22.) The meaning amounts to this, that there will be no need of outward aid or of any preparations, when God shall determine to overturn and destroy the reprobate; because, having been struck by him with giddiness, they shall wear themselves out in mutual conflict by the insatiable rage with which they shall attack each other.

And all flesh shall know. He repeats that statement which we have formerly seen, namely, that he will be acknowledged by all to be the God of Israel and the true and only God, when he shall have delivered his people from destruction; for he intended it to be a demonstration of his Divinity, that he openly manifested himself to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people.

The Mighty One of Jacob. Some read the word *Jacob* in the vocative case: "O mighty Jacob;" but I read it in the genitive case, "of Jacob." The Lord testifies that he is the Saviour, Redeemer, and Mighty One of Israel, that

they may rely with their whole heart on his defence and protection.

CHAPTER L.

1. Thus saith the Lord, Where *is* the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors *is it* to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

1. Sic dicit Iehova, Ubi libellus iste repudii matris vestræ, quam repudiavi? aut quis creditor cui vendidi vos? Ecce propter iniquitates vestras estis venditi, et propter transgressiones vestras repudiata est mater vestra.

2. Wherefore, when I came, *was there* no man? when I called, *was there* none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea; I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because *there is* no water, and dieth for thirst.

2. Cur veni, et nemo (occurrit?) vocavi, et nemo respondit? An abbreviando abbreviavit se manus mea, ut non redimat? Annon in me virtus ad liberandum? Ecce increpatione mea exsicco mare; pono flumina in desertum, ut putrescant pisces eorum præ defectu aquæ, et moriantur siti.

3. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

3. Induo cœlos caligine, et quasi saccum pono operimentum eorum.

4. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is* weary: he wakeneth morning by morning; he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

4. Dominus Iehova aperuit mihi linguam eruditorum, ut sciam lasso verbum in tempore. Excitabit manè, manè excitabit mihi aurem, ut audiam, sicut docti.

5. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

5. Dominus Iehova aperuit mihi aurem, et ego non fui rebellis; retrorsum non reversus sum.

6. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

6. Corpus meum exposui percutientibus, et genas meas vellentibus; faciem meam non abscondi ab ignominia et sputo.

7. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

7. Nam Dominus Iehova auxiliabitur mihi; propterea non sum pudefactus; ideo posui faciem meam quasi silicem, et scio quod non confundar.

8. *He is* near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who *is* mine adversary? let him come near to me.

8. Propè est qui me justificat, quis contendet mecum? Stemus simul: quis adversarius causæ meæ? Accedat ad me.

9. Behold, the Lord God will help

9. Ecce, Dominus Iehova auxili-

me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

10. Who *is* among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

11. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.

abitur mihi, quis est qui me condemnet? Ecce omnes quasi vestimentum veterascent; tinea comedet eos.

10. Quis in vobis est timens Iehovam? Audiat vocem servi ejus. Qui ambulavit in tenebris, et qui caruit luce, confidat in nomine Iehovæ, et innitatur Deo suo.

11. Ecce vos omnes succenditis ignem, et circundati estis scintillis. Ite in lumine ignis vestri, et in scintillis quas succendistis. E manu mea fuit hoc vobis; in dolore jacebitis.

1. *Where is that bill of divorcement?* There are various interpretations of this passage, but very few of the commentators have understood the Prophet's meaning. In order to have a general understanding of it, we must observe that union by which the Lord everywhere testifies that his people are bound to him; that is, that he occupies the place of a husband, and that we occupy the place of a wife. It is a spiritual marriage, which has been consecrated by his eternal doctrine and sealed by the blood of Christ. In the same manner, therefore, as he takes us under his protection as a early beloved wife, on condition that we preserve our fidelity to him by chastity; so when we have been false to him, he rejects us; and then he is said to issue a lawful divorce against us, as when a husband banished from his house an adulterous wife.

Thus, when the Jews were oppressed by calamities so many and so great, that it was easy to conclude that God had rejected and divorced them, the cause of the divorce came to be the subject of inquiry. Now, as men are usually eloquent in apologizing for themselves, and endeavour to throw back the blame on God, the Jews also complained at that time about their condition, as if the Lord had done wrong in divorcing them; because they were far from thinking that the promises had been made void, and the covenant annulled, by their crimes. They even laid the blame on their ancestors, as if they were punished for the sins of others. Hence

those taunts and complaints which Ezekiel relates. "Our fathers ate a sour grape, and our teeth are set on edge." (Ezek. xviii. 2.) Speeches of this kind being universally current among them, the Lord demands that they shall produce the "bill of divorcement," by means of which they may prove that they are free from blame and have been rejected without cause.

Now, a "bill of divorcement" was granted to wives who were unjustly divorced; for by it the husband was constrained to testify that his wife had lived chastely and honourably, so that it was evident that there was no other ground for the divorce than that she did not please the husband. Thus the woman was at liberty to go away, and the blame rested solely on the husband, to whose sullenness and bad temper was ascribed the cause of the divorce. (Deut. xxiv. 1.) This law of divorcement, as Ezekiel shews, (Matt. xix. 8,) was given by Moses on account of the hard-heartedness of that nation. By a highly appropriate metaphor, therefore, the Lord shews that he is not the author of the divorce, but that the people went away by their own fault, and followed their lusts, so that they had utterly broken the bond of marriage. This is the reason why he asks where is "*that* bill" of which they boasted; for there is emphasis in the demonstrative pronoun זֶה (*zĕh*), *that*, by which he intended to expose their idle excuses; as if he had said, that they throw off the accusation, and lay blame on God, as if they had been provided with a defence, whereas they had violated the bond of marriage, and could produce nothing to make the divorce lawful.

Or who is the creditor to whom I sold you? By another metaphor he demonstrates the same thing. When a man was overwhelmed by debt, so that he could not satisfy his creditors, he was compelled to give his children in payment. The Lord therefore asks, "Has he been constrained to do this? Has he sold them, or given them in payment to another creditor? Is he like spendthrifts or bad managers, who allow themselves to be overwhelmed by debt?" As if he had said, "You cannot bring this reproach against me; and therefore it is evident that, on account of your transgressions, you have been sold and reduced to slavery."

Lo, for your iniquities ye have been sold. Thus the Lord defends his majesty from all slanders, and refutes them by this second clause, in which he declares that it is by their own fault that the Jews have been divorced and "sold." The same mode of expression is employed by Paul, when he says that we are "sold under sin," (Rom. vii. 14,) but in a different sense; in the same manner as the Hebrew writers are wont to speak of abandoned men, whose wickedness is desperate. But here the Prophet intended merely to charge the Jews with guilt, because, by their own transgressions, they had brought upon themselves all the evils that they endured.

If it be asked, "Did the Lord divorce his heritage? Did he make void the covenant?" Certainly not; but the Lord is said to "divorce," as he is elsewhere said to profane, his heritage, (Ps. lxxxix. 39; Ezek. xxiv. 21,) because no other conclusion can be drawn from present appearances; for, when he did not bestow upon them his wonted favour, it was a kind of divorce or rejection. In a word, we ought to attend to these two contrasts, that the wife is divorced, either by the husband's fault, or because she is unchaste and adulterous; and likewise that children are sold, either for their father's poverty or by their own fault. And thus the course of argument in this passage will be manifest.

2. *Why did I come?* This might be a reason assigned, that the people have not only brought upon themselves an immense mass of evils by provoking God's anger, but have likewise, by their obstinacy, cut off the hope of obtaining pardon and salvation. But I think that God proceeds still further. After having explained that he had good reason for divorcing the people, because they had of their own accord given themselves up to bondage, when they might have been free, he adds that still it is not he who prevents them from being immediately set at liberty. As he shewed, in the former verse, that the whole blame rests with the Jews, so now he declares that it arises from their own fault that they grow old and rot in their distresses; for the Lord was ready to assist them, if they had not rejected his grace and kindness. In a word, he shews that both the beginning and

the progress of the evil arise from the fault of the people, in order that he may free God from all blame, and may shew that the Jews act wickedly in accusing him as the author of evil, or in complaining that he will not assist them.

First, then, the Lord says that he "came;" and why, but that he might stretch out his hand to the Jews? Whence it follows that they are justly deprived; for they would not receive his grace. Now, the Lord is said to "come," when he gives any token of his presence. He approaches by the preaching of the Word, and he approaches also by various benefits which he bestows on us, and by the tokens which he employs for manifesting his fatherly kindness toward us. "Was there ever any people," as Moses says, "that saw so many signs, and heard the voice of God speaking, like this people?" (Deut. iv. 33.) Constant invitation having been of no advantage to them, when he held out the hope of pardon and exhorted them to repentance, it is with good reason that he speaks of it as a monstrous thing, and asks why there was no man to meet him. They are therefore held to be convicted of ingratitude, because, while they ought to have sought God, they did not even choose to meet him when he came; for it is an instance of extreme ingratitude to refuse to accept the grace of God which is freely offered.

Why did I call, and no one answered? In the word *call* there is a repetition of the same statement in different words. When God "calls," we ought to be ready and submissive; for this is the "answer" which, he complains, was refused to him; that is, we ought to yield implicitly to his word. But this expression applies strictly to the matter now in hand; because God, when he offered a termination to their distresses, was obstinately despised, as if he had spoken to the deaf and dumb. Hence he infers that on themselves lies the blame of not having been sooner delivered; and he supports this by former proofs, because he had formerly shewn to the fathers that he possessed abundance of power to assist them. Again, that they may not cavil and excuse themselves by saying that they had not obtained salvation, though they heartily desired it, he maintains, on the other hand, that the cause of the change ought to be sought somewhere else

than in him, (for his power was not at all diminished,) and therefore that he would not have delayed to stretch out his hand to them in distress, if they had not wickedly refused his aid.

By shortening hath my hand been shortened? By this interrogation he expresses greater boldness, as if he were affirming what could not be called in question; for who would venture to plead against God that his power was diminished? He therefore relates how powerfully he rescued his people out of Egypt, that they may not now imagine that he is less powerful, but may acknowledge that their sins were the hinderance.[1] He says that by his reproof he "dried up the sea," as if he had struck terror by a threatening word; for by his authority, and at his command, the seas were divided, so that a passage was opened up, (Ex. xiv. 21,) and Jordan was driven back. (Josh. iii. 16.) The consequence was, that "the fishes," being deprived of water, died and putrified.

3. *I clothe the heavens with blackness.* He mentions also that thick darkness which was spread over all Egypt during the space of three days. (Ex. x. 22.) At that time the heaven was clothed as with a mourning dress; for, as fine weather has a gladdening influence, so blackness and darkness produce melancholy; and therefore he says, that the heavens were covered as with sackcloth or with a mourning dress, as if they had been tokens and expressions of mourning.[2] If any one prefer to view them as general statements, let him enjoy his opinion; but I think it probable that he glances at the history of the deliverance from Egypt,[3] from which it might easily be inferred that God, who had so miraculously assisted the fathers, was prevented by their ingratitude from granting relief to the miseries which now oppressed them.

[1] "Ains recognoissent que leurs vices empeschent que ceste puissance ne se monstre;" "But may acknowledge that their sins hinder that power from being manifested."

[2] "This gives a great idea of God's power. Though the sun shines so bright that no mortal eye can steadily behold its lustre, I can at pleasure send a thick cloud and intercept its rays, and make the heavens appear as if they had put on mourning."—*White.*

[3] "A l'histoire de la deliverance d'Egypte."

4. *The Lord Jehovah.* After having twice convicted them of guilt, he adds a consolation in his usual manner; for when the Lord covers us with shame, he intends immediately to free us from shame. Although, therefore, he shewed that the people had been rejected for the best possible reasons, and had perished by their own fault, because they proved themselves to be even unworthy of deliverance, yet he promises assistance to them. Again, because in a matter so difficult to be believed there needed more than ordinary proof, he begins by saying that God has sent and instructed him to execute his commands. This passage is commonly explained so as to relate to Christ, as if it had not been applicable to the Prophet, because he afterwards says, that he had been beaten with rods, which we nowhere read was done to Isaiah. But there is no great force in this argument; for David complains that his garments were divided, (Psalm xxii. 18,) which applies literally to Christ, (Matt. xxvii. 35; John xix. 24,) and yet it does not follow that this did not happen to David himself. For my own part, I have no doubt, that Isaiah comes forward as one who represents all the servants of God, not only those who were from the beginning, but those who should come afterwards.

Hath given me the tongue of the learned. He says that the Lord hath given him a "tongue," that the promises by which he cheers the people may have greater weight. Our faith wavers, if we suspect that a man speaks from himself; and the condition of that people was so wretched that no human arguments could induce them to entertain the hope of deliverance. It amounts to this, that the message of approaching salvation is brought to them from heaven; and if any person do not receive it, he must prove himself to be rebellious and disobedient. Although these words are literally intended by the Prophet to secure the belief of his statements, yet we may infer from them generally, that no man is fit to teach who has not first been qualified by God. This reminds all godly teachers to ask from the Spirit of God what otherwise they could not at all possess. They must indeed study diligently, so as not to ascend the pulpit till they have been fully prepared; but they must hold by this principle, that

all things necessary for discharging their office are gifts of the Holy Spirit. And, indeed, if they were not organs of the Holy Spirit, it would be extreme rashness to come forth publicly in the name of God.

That I may know a word in season to the weary. Some verb must be supplied here, such as, "to administer" or "to utter." The word "know" includes wisdom and skill, which a pastor ought to possess, that the word of God may be faithfully and profitably administered by him; as if he had said that he has been well instructed in the school of God, and thus knows well what is suitable to those who are wretched and who groan under a burden.[1] The term "weary" is applied to those who are overwhelmed by many afflictions; as we have formerly seen, "who giveth strength to the weary." (Is. xl. 29.) Thus also Christ speaks, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." (Matt. xi. 28.) He therefore means that God has been his teacher and instructor, that he may be able to soothe wretched men by appropriate consolation, that by means of it their dejected hearts may be encouraged by feeling the mercy of God.

Hence we infer that the most important duty of the ministers of the word is, to comfort wretched men, who are oppressed by afflictions, or who bend under their weight, and, in short, to point out what is true rest and serenity of mind, as we have formerly seen. (Is. xxxiii. 20.) We are likewise taught what each of us ought chiefly to seek in the Scriptures, namely, that we may be furnished with doctrine appropriate and suitable for relieving our distresses. He who, by seasonable consolation, in afflictive or even desperate affairs, can cheer and support his heart, ought to know that he has made good proficiency in the Gospel. I acknowledge that doctrine has indeed various uses; for not only is it useful for comforting the afflicted and feeble, but it likewise contains severe reproofs and threatenings against the obstinate. (2 Tim. iii. 16.) But Isaiah shews that the chief duty incumbent on him is, to bring some consolation to the Jews who, in the present distress, are ready to faint.

[1] "Qui gemissent sous le fardeau de leurs pechez;" "Who groan under the burden of their sins."

He will waken in the morning. The Prophet here testifies that the Lord is so careful about wretched and oppressed persons that he aids them "in the morning," that is, seasonably. I do acknowledge that we are often destitute of consolation; but, although God often permits us to languish, yet he knows every moment that is suitable for seasonably meeting the necessity by his aid. Besides, if his assistance be somewhat late, this happens through our own fault; for not only by our indolence, but likewise by rebellion, we withdraw ourselves from his grace. However that may be, he always watches carefully and runs to give aid; and even when we fly and resist, he calls us to him, that we may be refreshed by tasting his grace and kindness.

He twice repeats the phrase, "in the morning," by which he expresses continuance and earnestness, that we may not think that he is liable to sudden impulses like men, to cast off or quickly forget those whom he has once undertaken to guard, whom he continues, on the contrary, to make the objects of his grace till the end, and never leaves destitute of consolation.

That I may hear as the learned. He means that his ear has not only been pulled or twitched, as for sluggish and indolent persons, but has been formed and trained. Yet by his example he shews that God efficaciously teaches all whose ministry he intends to employ for the salvation of his Church; for it would have been a small matter to be instructed after the manner of men, if they had not within them the Spirit of God as their instructor. This makes still more evident the truth of what we have formerly said, that none are good teachers but those who have been good scholars. He calls them "learned" and "well-instructed;" for they who do not deign to learn, because they think that they are wise enough, are doubly fools; since they alone, in the judgment of God, are reckoned to be "well-instructed" and "learned," who permit themselves to be taught before discharging the office of teachers, that they may have clear knowledge of those things which they communicate to others, and may publicly bring forward nothing but what they can testify to have proceeded from God; and in a

word, they alone are "learned,"[1] who, by continually learning, do not refuse to make constant progress. Some read the word in the accusative, meaning, "that I may hear as (hearing) the learned;" but that is harsh and at variance with the true meaning.

5. *The Lord Jehovah hath opened mine ear.* He again repeats what he had formerly said, and here includes everything that belongs to the office of a teacher; for the "opening of the ear" must be understood to refer not only to doctrine, but to the whole calling; that is, when he takes one to be his servant, and informs of his duty him whom he has determined to send, when he gives commands, and enjoins him to execute what he commands. But the Lord "opens the ear," not only when he declares what is his will, but when he powerfully affects a man's heart and moves him to render obedience, as it is said, "Thou hast bored mine ear." (Ps. xl. 6.) And Christ says, "Whosoever hath heard and learned from the Father cometh to me." (John vi. 45.) Such is also the import of the second clause, *And I was not rebellious*, the meaning of which may be thus summed up: "He undertakes nothing at random, but, being fully convinced of God's calling, he discharges the office of a teacher, though it is laborious and difficult, because he is ready to obey."

6. *I exposed my body to the smiters.* With the reproaches, jeers, and insolence of wicked men, he contrasts the unshaken courage which he possesses; as if he had said that, "whatever resistance may be attempted by the despisers of God, yet he will baffle all their insults, so that he will never repent of the labours which he has undertaken." Yet this passage plainly shews that the ministers of the word cannot perform their office faithfully without being exposed to a contest with the world, and even without being fiercely assailed on all sides; for as soon as Isaiah says that he has obeyed the command of God, he likewise adds that "He has exposed his body to the smiters." The faithful servants of God, when they administer the doctrine of the word, cannot escape from this condition, but must endure fights, reproaches,

[1] "Ceux-là sont doctes."

hatred, slanders, and various attacks from adversaries, who loathe that liberty of advising and reproving which it is necessary for them to use. Let them, therefore, arm themselves with steadfastness and faith; for a dreadful battle is prepared for them. And not only does he describe the persecutions of wicked men, but the reproach of the world; because wicked men desire to be thought to have good cause for opposing the ministers of the word and persecuting their doctrine, and wish that those ministers should be regarded as criminals and malefactors, and held up to universal hatred and abhorrence. For these reasons they load them with various slanders, and do not refrain from any kind of reproach, as we know well enough by experience in the present day, when our adversaries call us heretics, deceivers, seditious persons, and assail us with other slanders, which were also directed against Christ and the Apostles. (Matt. xxvii. 63; John vii. 12; Acts xvi. 20.)

My face I did not hide from shame and spitting. He not only says that open and outward foes spat and inflicted blows on him, but glances at the slanders which he is compelled to bear from foes who are within and belong to the household; for out of the very bosom of the Church there always spring up wicked men and despisers of God, who insolently attack the prophets. They who wish to serve God must be prepared to endure all these things calmly, that they may walk through evil report and through good report, (2 Cor. vi. 8,) and may despise not only banishment, stripes, imprisonment, and death, but likewise reproaches and disgrace, though they may sometimes appear harder to endure than death itself. While this doctrine belongs to all believers, it belongs especially to the teachers of the word, who ought to go before others, and to be, as it were, standard-bearers.

7. *For the Lord Jehovah will help me.* The Prophet declares whence comes so great courage, which he and the other servants of God need to possess, in order to withstand courageously the attacks of every one. It comes from God's assistance, by relying on whom he declares that he is fortified against all the attacks of the world. After having, with

lofty fortitude, looked down contemptuously on all that was opposed to him, he exhorts others also to maintain the same firmness, and gives what may be called a picture of the condition of all the ministers of the word; that, by turning aside from the world, they may turn wholly to God and have their eyes entirely fixed upon him. There never will be a contest so arduous that they shall not gain the victory by trusting to such a leader.

Therefore I have set my face as a flint. By the metaphor of "a flint" he shews that, whatever may happen, he will not be afraid; for terror or alarm, like other passions, makes itself visible in the face. The countenance itself speaks, and shews what are our feelings. The servants of God, being so shamefully treated, must inevitably have sunk under such attacks, had they not withstood them with a forehead of stone or of iron. In this sense of the term, Jeremiah also is said to have been "set for a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a brazen wall, against the kings of Judah, and the princes, and the people," (Jer. i. 18;) and to Ezekiel is said to have been given "a strong forehead, and even one of adamant, and harder than flint, that he might not be dismayed at the obstinacy of the people." (Ezek. iii. 9.)

Therefore I was not ashamed. The word "ashamed" is twice used in this verse, but in different senses; for in the former clause it relates to the feeling, and in the latter to the thing itself or the effect. Accordingly, in the beginning of the verse, where he boasts that he is not confounded with shame, because God is on his side, he means that it is not enough that God is willing to help us, if we do not also feel it; for of what advantage to us will the promises of God be, if we distrust him? Confidence, therefore, is demanded, that we may be supported by it, and may assuredly know that we enjoy God's favour.

I shall not be confounded. In the conclusion of the verse he boldly declares his conviction that the end will be prosperous. Thus "to be confounded" means "to be disappointed;" for they who had entertained a vain and deceitful hope are liable to be mocked. Here we see that some special assistance is promised to godly teachers and ministers

of the word; so that the fiercer the attacks of Satan, and the stronger the hostility of the world, so much the more does the Lord defend and guard them by extraordinary protection. And hence we ought to conclude, that all those who, when they come to the contest, tremble and lose courage, have never been duly qualified for discharging their office; for he who knows not how to strive knows not how to serve God and the Church, and is not fitted for administering the doctrine of the word.

8. *He is near that justifieth me.* We ought always to keep in remembrance that the Prophet mentions nothing that is peculiar to himself, but testifies what the Lord chooses to be, and will always be, towards faithful ministers, that whosoever has this testimony, that God has sent him, and knows that he discharges his office faithfully, may boldly despise all adversaries, and may not be moved by their reproaches, for he is "justified" by the Lord; and, in like manner, the Lord always is, and will be, near to defend and maintain his truth. Besides, that any one may be able to make this protestation, it is necessary that his conscience be pure; for, if any man thrust himself rashly into the office, and have no testimony of his calling, or bring forward his dreams publicly, in vain will he boast of this promise, which belongs only to those who have been called by God, and who sincerely and uprightly perform their duty. Now, although either hypocrites or despisers never cease to annoy the servants of God, yet Isaiah advances to meet them, as if none would venture to pick a quarrel or utter a slander; not that he can keep them in check,[1] but because they will gain nothing by all their attempts. He therefore declares, that he looks down with utter contempt on the false accusations which the enemies of sound doctrine pour out against its teachers. There is no crime with which they do not upbraid them; but their efforts are fruitless; for the Judge, by whom their integrity is maintained, is not far off. They may, therefore, as Paul did, boldly appeal from the wicked and unjust judgments of men to "the day of the Lord,"

[1] "Non pas qu'il puisse tenir les meschans en bride;" "Not that he can keep wicked men in check."

by whom their innocence will be made manifest. (1 Cor. iv. 4.)

Let us stand together. Godly teachers ought to have so great confidence as not to hesitate to give a bold defiance to adversaries. Satan, with his agents, does not always venture to attack openly, especially when he fights by falsehoods, but by ambuscade, and by burrowing under ground, endeavours to take them by surprise; but the servants of God are not afraid to "stand up" openly, and enter into contest with the enemy, and contend by arguments, provided that adversaries are willing to enter into the lists. So great is the force of truth that it does not dread the light of day, as we say that Isaiah here attacks boldly those whom he perceives to be plotting against him; and therefore he repeats,—

Let him draw near to me. Godly ministers ought to be ready to assign a reason for their doctrine. But where is the man that is willing to hear them patiently, and to consider what is the nature of that doctrine which they publicly declare? True indeed, adversaries will approach, but it is to draw their swords to slay them; to sharpen their tongues, that by every kind of slander they may tear them in pieces. In short, their whole defence consists in arms or deceitful stratagems; for they do not venture to contend by scriptural arguments. Relying, therefore, on the justice of our cause, we may freely defy them to the conflict. Though they condemn us without listening to our vindication, and though they have many that support the sentence which they have pronounced, we have no reason to be afraid; for God, whose cause we plead, is our Judge, and will at length acquit us.

9. *Who is he that condemneth me?* Paul appears to allude to this passage, in his Epistle to the Romans, when he says, "It is God that justifieth; who shall condemn?" (Rom. viii. 33, 34.) We may safely have recourse to the judgment-seat of God, when we are well assured that we have obtained his righteousness by free grace through Christ. But here Isaiah handles a different subject; for he does not speak of the universal salvation of men, but of the ministry of the Word, which the Lord will defend against the attacks

of wicked men, and will not suffer his people to be overwhelmed by their fraud or violence.

Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment. He now shews more clearly that it is not in the shade or at ease that he boasts of his courage, as if none were giving him any disturbance; but he declares that, though he is assailed by deadly foes, still he boldly maintains his position; because all who fight with the Word of God shall fall and vanish away through their own frailty. In order to place the matter before their own eyes, he employs a demonstrative particle, "*Behold*, like garments shall they perish, being consumed by worms." The Psalmist makes use of the same metaphor, when he compares the men of this world to the children of God. (Psalm xlix. 14, 15.) The former, though they make a show and shine like dazzling garments, shall perish; but believers, who now are covered with filth, shall at length obtain new brightness and shine brilliantly like the stars. Here he speaks literally of fierce dogs that attack and bark at godly teachers. Though such persons are held in high estimation by men, and possess very high authority among them, yet their lustre shall perish and fade away, like that of garments which are eaten by worms.

10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord?* After having spoken of God's invincible aid, by which all prophets are protected, he directs his discourse to believers, that they may suffer themselves to be guided by the Word of God, and may become obedient. Hence we may infer how far a holy boasting raised him above his slanderers; for, in consequence of wicked men, through their vast numbers, possessing at that time great influence among the Jews, there was a risk of overwhelming the faith of the small minority.[1] When he asks, "Where are they that fear God?" he points out that their number is small. Yet he addresses them separately, that they may detach themselves from the mixed crowd, and not take part in counsels which are wicked, and which God has condemned. In like manner we have formerly met with

[1] "Le danger estoit qu'ils n' estaignissent la foy d'une petite troupe de fideles;" "The danger was that they would extinguish the faith of a small body of believers."

these words, "Say ye not, A confederacy." (Is. viii. 12.) Although therefore the enemies of God are so numerous as to constitute a vast army, yet Isaiah does not hesitate to say that there are some left who shall profit by his doctrine.

He speaks to those who "fear God;" for, wherever there is no religion and no fear of God, there can be also no entrance for doctrine. We see how audaciously doctrine is rejected by those who, in other respects, wish to be reckoned acute and sagacious; for, in consequence of being swelled with pride, they detest modesty and humility, and are exceedingly stupid in this wisdom of God. It is not without good reason, therefore, that he lays this foundation, namely, the fear of God, that his Word may be attentively and diligently heard. Hence also it is evident that true fear of God is nowhere to be found, unless where men listen to his Word; for hypocrites do proudly and haughtily boast of piety and the fear of God, but they manifest rebellious contempt, when they reject the doctrine of the Gospel and all godly exhortations. The clear proof of such persons is, that the mask which they desire to wear is torn off.

Let him hear the voice of his servant. He might have simply said, "the voice of God," but he expressly says, "of his servant;" for God does not wish to be heard but by the voice of his ministers, whom he employs to instruct us. Isaiah speaks first of himself, and next of all others who have been invested with the same office; and there is an implied contrast between that "hearing" which he demands and that wicked eagerness to despise doctrine in which irreligious men indulge, while they also, by their insolence, encourage many idle and foolish persons to practise similar contempt.

He who hath walked in darkness. Believers might have brought it as an objection, that the fruit of their piety was not visible, but that they were miserably afflicted, as if they had lived a life of abandoned wickedness; and therefore the Prophet anticipates and sets aside this complaint, by affirming that believers, though hitherto they have been harshly treated, yet do not in vain obey God and his Word; for, if they "have walked in darkness," they shall at length enjoy

the light of the Lord. By "darkness" the Prophet here means not the ignorance or blindness of the human understanding, but the afflictions by which the children of God are almost always overwhelmed. And this is the consolation which he formerly mentioned, when he declared that "the tongue of the learned had been given to him, that he might speak a word to one who was faint." (Ver. 4.) Thus he promises that they who have hitherto been discouraged and almost overwhelmed by so many distresses shall receive consolation.

11. *Lo, all of you kindle a fire.* He upbraids the Jews with choosing to kindle for themselves their own light, instead of drawing near to the light of God. This passage has been badly expounded; and if we wish to understand its true meaning, we must attend to the contrast between the light of God and the light of men; that is, between the consolation which is brought to us by the Word of God and the empty words of comfort uttered by men, when by idle and useless things they attempt and toil to alleviate their distresses. Having formerly spoken of "light" and "darkness," and having promised light to believers, who hear the voice of the Lord, he shews that the Jews had rejected this light, in order to kindle another light for themselves, and threatens that ultimately they shall be consumed by this light, as by a conflagration. Thus Christ upbraids the Jews with "rejoicing in John's light," (John v. 35,) because they made a wrong use of his official character, in order to obscure or rather to extinguish the glory of Christ. To bring forward John's official character, in order to cover with darkness the glory of Christ, was nothing else than to extinguish the light of God shining in a mortal man, in order to kindle another light for themselves, not that it might guide them by pointing out the road, but that, by foolishly rejoicing in it, they might be driven about in every direction.

When he says that they are *surrounded by sparks*, he glances at their various thoughts, by which they were agitated and carried about in uncertainty sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another; and in this way he

mocks at their folly, because they willingly and eagerly ran wheresoever their foolish pleasures drew them.

Walk in the light of your fire. As if he had said, "You shall know by experience how useless and transitory is your light, when your unwarranted hopes shall have deceived you." The ironical permission denotes disappointment. Others explain it, that wicked men kindle against themselves the fire of God's wrath; but the Prophet looked higher, and that sentiment appears not to agree with this passage.

From my hand. Because wicked men, being intoxicated by false confidence, think that they are placed beyond the reach of all danger, and, viewing the future with reckless disregard, trust to "their own light," that is, to the means of defence with which they imagine themselves to be very abundantly provided; the Lord declares, that *they shall lie down in sorrow*, and that this shall proceed "from his hand;" and, in a word, that men who have forsaken the light of the Word, and who seek consolation from some other quarter, shall miserably perish.

CHAPTER LI.

1. Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.

2. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

3. For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4. Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me,

1. Audite me, qui sequimini justitiam, qui quæritis Iehovam; aspicite ad petram excisionis vestræ, et ad cavernam specus unde eruti estis.

2. Aspicite ad Abraham patrem vestrum, et ad Saram, quæ peperit vos; quoniam unicum vocavi eum, et benedixi, et multiplicavi eum.

3. Utique consolabitur Iehova Sion, consolabitur omnes vastitates ejus, ponetque desertum ejus quasi locum deliciarum, et solitudinem ejus quasi hortum Iehovæ. Lætitia et gaudium invenientur in ea; confessio et vox cantici.

4. Attendite ad me, populе mi; et plebs mea audite me; quoniam Lex a me egredietur, et judicium

and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

5. My righteousness *is* near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people: the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

6. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart *is* my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. *Art* thou not it that hath cut Rahab, *and* wounded the dragon?

10. *Art* thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

11. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy *shall be* upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; *and* sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

12. I, *even* I, *am* he that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man *that* shall die, and of the son of man *which* shall be made *as* grass;

13. And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where *is* the fury of the oppressor?

meum in lucem populorum patefaciam.

5. Prope est justitia mea; egressa est salus mea; et brachia mea populos judicabunt. Me insulæ expectabunt, et in brachium meum sperabunt.

6. Levate in cœlum oculos vestros, et aspicite in terram deorsum; quoniam cœli ut fumus peribunt; et terra ut vestis veterascet; et incolæ ejus in eundem modum interibunt. Atque salus mea in æternum manebit, et justitia mea non interibit.

7. Audite me, qui cognoscitis justitiam, populus in cujus corde est lex mea. Ne timeatis probrum hominis et a contumelia eorum ne frangamini animo.

8. Quoniam sicut vestimentum comedet eos tinea; sicut lanam comedet eos vermis. At justitia mea perpetuo manebit, et salus mea in seculum seculorum.

9. Suscita te, suscita te, indue fortitudinem, brachium Iehovæ. Excita te, sicut in diebus antiquis, seculis olim præteritis. Annon tu illud es, proscindens superbam, conficiens draconem?

10. Annon tu illud es, quod exsiccavit mare, aquam voraginis magnæ; quod vertit profundum maris in viam, ad transitum redemptorum?

11. Ergo redempti ad Iehovam revertentur; venient in Sion cum cantico, eritque gaudium perpetuum super caput eorum. Lætitiam et gaudium obtinebunt, fugientque dolor et gemitus.

12. Ego, ego sum, qui vos consolor. Quænam es, ut timeas ab homine qui morietur? a filio hominis, qui fœnum reputabitur?

13. Et oblita es Iehovæ factoris tui, qui extendit cœlos, et fundavit terram; et formidasti jugiter tota die a furore affligentis, dum ad vas-

nually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where *is* the fury of the oppressor?

14. The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

15. But I *am* the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts *is* his name.

16. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou *art* my people.

17. Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury: thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, *and* wrung *them* out.

18. *There is* none to guide her among all the sons *whom* she hath brought forth; neither *is there any* that taketh her by the hand of all the sons *that* she hath brought up.

19. These two *things* are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?

20. Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God.

21. Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine:

22. Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God *that* pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

23. But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

tandum se parat. Et ubi furor affligentis?

14. Festinat exul ut solvatur, ut non moriatur in specu, nec deficiat eum panis suus.

15. Et ego Iehova Deus tuus, qui seco mare, et sonabunt fluctus ejus; Iehova exercituum nomen ejus.

16. Et posui verba mea in ore tuo; et in umbra manus meæ protexi te, ut plantem cœlos, et fundem terram. Dicam Sioni, Populus meus tu.

17. Expergiscere, expergiscere, surge, Ierusalem, quæ bibisti e manu Iehovæ calicem furoris ejus; fæces calicis angustiæ (*vel, trepidationis*) bibisti exprimens.

18. Non est qui regat eam ex omnibus filiis quos genuit; non est qui apprehendat manum ejus ex omnibus filiis quos educavit.

19. Duo hæc acciderunt tibi. Quis condolebit tibi? Vastitas et contritio, et fames, et gladius. Quis consolabitur te?

20. Filii tui exanimati sunt; jacuerunt in capite omnium viarum, sicut bos sylvestris in reti, pleni furore Iehovæ, increpatione Dei tui.

21. Itaque nunc audi hoc, misera et ebria, non a vino.

22. Sic dicit Dominus tuus, Iehova, et Deus tuus, vindex populi sui: Ecce abstuli e manu tua calicem angustiæ (*vel, trepidationis*); fæcem calicis furoris mei. Non fiet ut bibas amplius.

23. Et tradam eum in manus oppressorum tuorum, qui dixerunt animæ tuæ, Incurvate, et transibimus. Et posuisti quasi terram corpus tuum, et quasi viam transeuntibus.

1. *Hearken to me, ye that follow righteousness.* The Prophet now exhorts the Jews not to despair because they are few in number; for they had been cut down and diminished to such a degree that they appeared to be on the eve of being reduced to nothing, while there was little or no hope of any to succeed them. He therefore reminds them of their origin, that they may know that, though they are a small remnant, God can increase and multiply them; and he bids them contemplate their father Abraham, who, though he was a single individual, grew to a vast number, and received from God a numerous posterity. Hence they might infer that God, who, in so short a period, had multiplied their fathers, would in future multiply them also; because his power has not been diminished, and his will has not been changed.

Look to the rock of your hewing.[1] Some are of opinion that Abraham is called a "Rock," because, as Paul declares, "he was strong in faith." (Rom. iv. 20.) Others assign a totally opposite meaning to this metaphor; for they think that he is called a "Rock," because he was worn out by age, and that Sarah is called a *Pit*, because she was barren. But both, in my opinion, are in the wrong; for it is a simple metaphor, taken from quarries, and declares that they have descended from Abraham and Sarah, as stones are cut out of a "rock" and a "pit." Amidst the ruin of the nation it was highly necessary that the godly should be supported by this doctrine and admonition. God had promised that the seed of Abraham should be "as the stars of heaven," (Gen. xv. 5,) and as "the sand of the sea." (Gen. xxii. 17.) This promise had apparently failed amidst that desolation in which they who were left hardly differed at all from a few clusters when the vintage was ended.

But since they had already known by experience how powerful was the strength of God to create a vast people out of nothing, the Prophet bids them cherish favourable hopes, that they may not be ungrateful to God; and he addresses his discourse directly to believers, to whom this was a sore temptation. He does not speak to all, but to those only who

[1] "Regardez à la pierre dont vous avez esté coupez." "Look to the stone whence you were hewn."

could rely on the promise, that is, to those whom he calls "followers of righteousness;" for the country abounded with unbelievers and hypocrites, who had formerly revolted from the practice of piety; and so much the more laudable was the steadfastness of those who did not cease to follow what was right. Wherever "righteousness" is practised, there God is listened to; and wherever unbelief reigns, reliance cannot be placed on any promise.[1] Although therefore they boasted that they were the children of Abraham, yet all were not capable of receiving this doctrine.

Ye that seek Jehovah. He explains the method of "following righteousness" to consist in "seeking the Lord;" for they who make an outward shew of "righteousness," and do not aim at this end, must have wandered during their whole life. These two things, therefore, must be joined together; namely, the practice of righteousness and seeking God.

2. *For I called him alone.* This application plainly shews what was the design of this exhortation of the Prophet. It was to encourage the hearts of believers to cherish the hope of a better condition. He says that he "called him *one* or *alone*," not only because he had none along with him, when he was called out of his country, but because the Lord suffered him to dwell in the land of Canaan without children up to a worn out old age, so that he had no hope of having children, especially because Sarah (Gen. xvi. 2) also was barren; and when at length, as a solace for their childless condition, one son was given to them, not long afterwards he appeared to be led forth to slaughter. Yet the Lord increased and enriched him with a great number of children.

How needful this consolation was to the Jews has been remarked by me a little before, and may be easily learned from their condition, which history plainly declares to have been wretched and unhappy. To us also, in the present day, amidst this distracted condition of the Church, it is highly necessary, that we may not be discouraged because our number is small, and that we may hope that God will increase his Church by unexpected methods. We behold a

[1] "On ne sauroit recevoir promesse quelconque." "No promise whatever can be believed."

very clear and striking testimony of this in the blessing by which the Lord increased, even to extreme old age, the posterity of Abraham, who was childless and solitary. That promise relates not to the Jews only, but to other nations; and on this account also he "was no longer called Abram, but Abraham." (Gen. xvii. 5.)

3. *Surely Jehovah will comfort Zion.* The Prophet shews that in the person of Abraham there was exhibited an example which applies to all ages; for, as the Lord suddenly produced from one man so numerous an offspring, so he will also people his Church by wonderful and unknown methods, and not once only, but whenever she shall be thought to be childless and solitary. In like manner, Paul, after having spoken of the faith of Abraham and praised his excellence, applies that doctrine to each of us, that "he believed in hope against hope, and that his mind was not driven hither and thither, but that he was fully persuaded that what God had promised he was able also to perform, though it appeared to be incredible and at variance with all reason." (Rom. iv. 18-21.)

He will comfort all her desolations. This may be explained to mean, "The Lord will comfort his Church, not only when she shall be in a flourishing condition, but likewise when she shall be desolate and reduced to solitude;" for she must have been laid desolate, and her frightful ruins must have brought her to the verge of destruction, before she felt the aid which is here described.

And will make her desert like a place of delights. The Prophet here alludes to a passage in the writings of Moses, in which he relates that man was at first placed in "the garden of Eden," (Gen. ii. 15,) that is, in "a place of delights," from which he was driven out by his own fault. (Gen. iii. 24.) Now we, who have been deprived of that blessing which he bestowed on our first parent, are exiles throughout the whole world, and are deprived of that paradise. Accordingly, whenever great calamities happen, and the order of events is overturned, and everything is thrown into wretched desolation and ruin, let us know that we are punished for our unbelief and for our heinous sins; and let

us remember that sentence which was pronounced on our first parent, or rather on all mankind; and that in every part of life, but especially when we see the condition of the Church ruined and overturned. The earth, which otherwise would abound in blessings of every kind, has been reduced to solitude through our fault; and the Church, which would flourish everywhere, has been ruined and laid desolate.

Joy and gladness. He means that the change shall be so great that the Church will no longer groan or complain; for, so long as the Church was oppressed by a harsh captivity, nothing could be heard in her but mourning and lamentation. Now restored, she shall rejoice and render thanksgiving to God. Thus we are also exhorted to gratitude, that we may burst out into praise and thanksgiving to God, when we have had experience of his goodness.

4. *Attend to me, my people.* There are good reasons why the Lord so frequently demands that he shall be heard. We know by experience how slow we are to hear him, especially in adversity; and even when we would have great need of consolation, we reject it by our impatience, and faint. Each of us, therefore, the sorer are the afflictions which press upon him, ought to endeavour more earnestly to enlarge his heart, and in this way to arouse himself, and to shake off his slothfulness, that he may receive consolation. What is here demanded is *attention*, to sustain our hearts by patience, till the season of grace be fully come.

For the law shall go forth from me. The meaning is, that the Lord will again reign, and will arouse his Church to call on his name. Though the word *Law* is equivalent to the edict which God shall order to be proclaimed, when he shall be pleased to gather his Church, yet at the same time he describes his manner of reigning; namely, by his "Law" and by his doctrine. Hence we see that wherever doctrine is rejected, God's government is not found, that is, is not recognised by men. By *judgment* he means the order and administration of government, by which he shall restore his kingdom.

For a light of the peoples. He says that this will be "for a light of the peoples," because, when God begins to reign,

miserable men[1] are rescued from darkness and enlightened by the doctrine of the word.

I will reveal. This verb אַרְגִּיעַ (*ărgīăng*) is variously expounded by commentators, because רָגַע (*rāgăng*) has various significations. Sometimes it signifies to "cut" and "open," and sometimes "to be at rest." Some therefore explain it, "I will cause to rest," that is, "I will establish;" and that meaning is not inappropriate. Most of the Jewish writers explain it differently, but I shall not relate their crooked and harsh interpretations. I rather approve of this translation, "I will manifest judgment," or, "I will cause judgment to break forth," or, which means the same thing, "I will reveal;" because I think that it agrees better with the former clause. Repetitions, we know, are very customary among the Hebrew writers. Although, therefore, he employs different words, still the meaning is the same. Having formerly said that "the law shall go forth from him," he now says that "he will reveal judgment."

5. *My righteousness is near.* He confirms the former doctrine. The "righteousness" of the Lord has relation to men, who know by experience that he is "righteous." While the people were oppressed by cruel bondage, they knew, indeed, that they were justly punished for their sins; but they might wonder that they were so much forsaken, because the worship of God ceased, and his name was blasphemed by wicked men, who pursued their wicked career without punishment. In order, therefore, to bring them some consolation, he promises that God will speedily assist them, so that all shall acknowledge that he is faithful and just. By the word "righteous" the Prophet does not mean that he renders to every one a "righteous" reward, but that he yields the best protection, and dispenses the largest kindness, to his people, that he faithfully performs his promises to all believers, when he delivers them and does not suffer them to be finally overwhelmed.

This appears more clearly from the following clause, in which, for the purpose of explanation, he adds, *My salvation*

[1] "Les hommes miserables de nature." "Men who are by nature miserable."

hath gone forth; for the "righteousness" of God shone brightly in the deliverance of the people. Now, the captivity in which the Jews were held in Babylon was a kind of death, in consequence of which that deliverance is here called "Salvation."

My arms shall judge the peoples. By "arms" he means the wide exercise of his power. That figure of speech which describes God under forms of expression drawn from the human frame occurs frequently in Scripture. Because God's government appeared to be confined within narrow limits, or rather was not at all visible, on this account he mentions *arms*, by which he means that he will spread his kingdom far and wide.

6. *Lift up your eyes toward heaven.* When we see so great changes in the world, we are apt to think that the Church comes within the influence of the same violent motion; and therefore we need to have our minds elevated above the ordinary course of nature; otherwise, the salvation of the Church will appear to hang on a thread, and to be carried hither and thither by the billows and tempests. Yet we may see both in heaven and in earth how wisely God regulates all things, with what fatherly kindness he upholds and defends his workmanship and the frame of the world, and with what equity he provides for all his creatures. But in a remarkable manner he deigns to watch over his Church, as he has separated her from the ordinary rank.

And look upon the earth beneath. Both of the views now stated are here embraced by the Prophet; for he bids believers turn their eyes upwards and downwards, so as to perceive both in heaven and in earth the wonderful providence of God, by which he so beautifully preserves the order and harmony which he at first established. But he adds that, though heaven and earth hasten to decay, it is impossible that the Church shall fail, the stability of which is founded on God; as if he had said, "A thousand times rather shall heaven mingle with the earth than the promise on which your salvation rests shall fail of its accomplishment."

My salvation shall endure for ever. First of all, he men-

tions "salvation," and next he speaks of "righteousness," on which it rests as on a solid foundation. Whenever, therefore, dangers shall press upon us on every hand, let us learn to betake ourselves to this place of refuge. And with this sentiment agree the words of the Psalmist, "The heavens shall wax old and vanish away; but thou, Lord, art always the same, and thy years are not changed." (Psalm cii. 26, 27.) Both passages remind us that the grace of God, which he displays in the preservation of his Church, surpasses all his other works. Everything that is contained in heaven and earth is frail and fading; but God's salvation, by which he guards the Church, is eternal, and therefore cannot be liable to these dangers.

7. *Hearken to me.* Because wicked men, when they enjoy prosperity, laugh at our faith, and ridicule our distresses and afflictions, on this account the Prophet exhorts believers to patience, that they may not dread their reproaches or be dismayed by their slanders. The reason assigned is, that their prosperity shall not be of long duration. Whatever may be their insolent boasting, they are already pronounced (verse 8) to be the food of *moths* and *worms;* while God holds in his hand the salvation of believers, from which they appear to be thrown to the greatest possible distance. Here we ought again to observe the repetition of the word *Hearken.* This is now the third time that the Lord demands a "hearing;" because, when we tremble with anxiety on account of our distresses, it is with the greatest difficulty that we rely on his promises, and therefore we need to be often roused and stimulated, till we have conquered every difficulty.

Ye that know righteousness. Here he does not address unbelievers, but those who "know righteousness;" because, though they do not intentionally reject the word of God, yet they often shut the door against his "righteousness," so that it does not reach them, when, under the influence of adversity, they shut their ears and almost despair. In order therefore that they may receive the promises, and that they may admit consolation, the Prophet stirs up and arouses them.

A people in whose heart is my law. We must attend to

the train of thought. First, he describes what kind of people the Lord wishes to have, namely, "those who know righteousness;" and next he explains what is the nature of this knowledge, that is, when the people have "the law" fixed and deeply rooted in their hearts. Without the word of the Lord there can be no "righteousness." No laws of men, however well framed, will lead us to true righteousness, of which they may indeed give us a feeble idea, but which they never can justly describe. At the same time, he shews in what manner we ought to make progress in the law of the Lord; namely, by embracing it with the heart; for the seat of the law is not in the brain, but in the heart, that, being imbued with heavenly doctrine, we may be altogether renewed.

8. *But my righteousness shall continually endure.* Because the believing servants of God must endure many reproaches and slanders from the enemies of the word, the Prophet exhorts and encourages them to bear it courageously. It frequently happens that we are more deeply moved by the contumely and insults of men than by fire and sword; but we ought to reckon it praise and glory to be the object of their contempt and abhorrence. True valour springs from this consideration, that, although the world reject us as "filth and offscourings," (1 Cor. iv. 13,) God holds us in estimation; because we maintain the same cause with himself. Let us with Moses, therefore, "prefer the reproach of Christ to the treasures of the Egyptians." (Heb. xi. 26.) Let us rejoice with the Apostles, who "departed from the council glad and joyful, because they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus." (Acts v. 41.)

And my salvation for ever and ever. Because the death of wicked men would yield to us small consolation, if we were not saved, he shews what will be our condition, namely, that we shall never be left destitute of "God's righteousness and salvation." But the comparison may appear to be inappropriate, when he contrasts the destruction of the wicked with his righteousness. Far more clearly and suitably it might have been thus expressed: "though the reprobate indulge in mirth, yet they shall speedily perish; but believers,

though they appear to be dead, shall live." Again, because he makes no mention of us, and commends only the eternity of God's righteousness, it may be objected, that to us who are almost overwhelmed this is of no avail. But by these words the Prophet instructs us, that in our afflictions we ought to seek consolation from the thought, that our health and salvation are, as it were, shut up in God; for, so long as men trust or rely on themselves, they cannot cherish any good hope that does not speedily decay; and therefore we ought to turn our hearts to God, whose "mercy endureth from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him," as David says, "and his righteousness to children's children." (Psalm ciii. 17.)

Because salvation is founded on the goodness of God, Isaiah reminds us of it, that men may be reduced to nothing, and that confidence may be placed in God alone. The meaning may be thus summed up, "*Salvation* is in God, that by it he may preserve, not himself, but us; *righteousness* is in God, that he may display it for our defence and preservation." Accordingly, from the eternity of God's "salvation and righteousness" we ought to infer that the servants of God cannot possibly perish; which agrees with the passage quoted a little before from David, "Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. The children of thy servants shall dwell, and their posterity shall be established for ever." (Psalm cii. 27, 28.) Thus we see how he applies this eternity to the children of God, who do not subsist in themselves, but in God, and have the foundation of their salvation in him.

9. *Awake, awake.* Here the Prophet instructs us, that, when God cheers us by his promises, we ought also to pray earnestly that he would perform what he has promised. He does not comfort us in order to render us slothful, but that we may be inflamed with a stronger desire to pray, and may continually exercise our faith. The Prophet speaks according to our feelings; for we think that God is asleep, so long as he does not come to the relief of our wants; and the Lord indulges us so far as to permit us to speak and pray according to the feeling of our weakness. Believers therefore entreat the Lord to "awake," not that they imagine him to be

idle or asleep in heaven;[1] but, on the contrary, they confess their own sluggishness and ignorance, in not being able to form any conception of God, so long as they are not aware of receiving his assistance. But yet, though the flesh imagine that he is asleep, or that he disregards our calamities, faith rises higher and lays hold on his eternal power.

Put on strength, O arm of Jehovah. He is said to "awake" and "put on strength," when he exhibits testimonies of his power, because otherwise we think that he is idle or asleep. Meanwhile, the Prophet, by addressing the arm of God which was concealed, holds it out to the view of believers as actually present, that they may be convinced that there is no other reason why they are so bitterly and painfully afflicted by their enemies than because God has withdrawn his aid. The cause of the delay has been already shewn, that they had estranged themselves from God.[2]

In ancient days. By the term "ancient days" he shews that we ought to bear in remembrance all that the Lord did long ago for the salvation of his people. Though he appears to pause and to take no more care about us, still he is the same God who formerly governed his Church; and therefore he can never forsake or abandon those whom he takes under his protection.

In ages long ago past. This repetition tells us still more clearly, that we ought to consider not only those things which have happened lately, but those which happened long ago; for we ought to stretch our minds even to the most remote ages, that they may rise above temptations, which otherwise might easily overwhelm us.

Art thou not it that crushed the proud one?[3] The nume-

[1] "Non pas qu'ils le pensent oisif ni endormi au ciel."

[2] See p. 50.

[3] "Here is a noble mixture of lively figures; the Prophet first addressing himself to the Lord, as if he were fast asleep, tired with fatigue and labour; then painting him in a martial posture, dressing himself in arms, and putting on his accoutrements; then raising his courage by a narration of his former valorous performances, Art not thou that Arm which cut off the Egyptian Rahab, when with all the strength of his kingdom he pursued the naked Israelites to the further banks of the Red Sea? Certainly thou art the same, not at all decayed in strength, but able to do as much for thy people now, as for their fathers then."—*White.*

rous testimonies of grace which God had displayed in various ages are here collected by the Prophet, so that, if a few are not enough, the vast number of them may altogether confirm the faith of the Church. But, since it would be too tedious to draw up an entire catalogue, he brings forward that singular and most remarkable of all such events, namely, that the people were once delivered from Egypt in a miraculous manner, for I have no doubt that by *Rahab*[1] he means proud and cruel Egypt; as it is also said, "I will mention Rahab and Babylon among my friends." (Ps. lxxxvii. 4.) In like manner Ezekiel calls the king of Egypt "a Dragon." "Behold, I am against thee, O Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon, who dwellest in the midst of thy rivers." (Ezek. xxix. 3.) It is sufficiently evident, and is universally admitted, that the Prophet here calls to remembrance the miraculous deliverance of the people from Egypt. "If at that time the pride of Egypt was tamed and subdued, if the dragon was put to flight, why should we not hope for the same thing?"

By putting the question, if it be the same arm, he argues from the nature of God; for this could not be affirmed respecting the "arm" of man, whose strength, though it be great, is diminished and fails through time? Milo, who had been very strong, when he became old and looked at his arms, groaned because the strength which he possessed at an earlier period had now left him. But it is not so with God, whose strength no lapse of time can diminish. These words ought to be read (ἐμφατικῶς) emphatically, "Art thou not it?" For he shews that the Lord is the same as he formerly was, because he remains unchangeable.

10. *Which dried up the sea.* Though Isaiah does not relate all the miracles which God performed when he brought out his people from the bondage of Egypt, yet he intended to include in a few words all that are related by Moses, that the Jews, having been briefly addressed, might consider the various ways in which the Lord had demonstrated his power. The drying up of the Red Sea is mentioned, not only on account of the extraordinary ex-

[1] "Par *Rahab*, que nous avons traduit l'orgueilleuse." "By Rahab, which we have translated The proud."

cellence of the miracle, but because the numerous miracles which preceded it were directed to this end, that the people, rescued from unjust violence and tyranny, might pass into the promised land. Accordingly, the Prophet expressly mentions that *a way was opened up for the redeemed.* From this example we ought to consider what God will be to us, so as to draw this conclusion, that in future God will always be like himself, as is evident from the context.

11. *Therefore the redeemed by Jehovah shall return.* He now describes more plainly what he had briefly remarked; for, after having related the magnificent works of God, by which he formerly displayed his power in Egypt, in order to deliver his people, he concludes that neither the sea, nor the lofty rocks, nor the whirlpools, nor even hell itself, can prevent him from leading forth his people out of Babylon. And in order to confirm it more fully, and to apply that example, he calls them "redeemed," that they may know that, when God calls himself the deliverer of his people, this belongs to them, and that they may not doubt that, in delivering them, he will produce such an example as had been already exhibited; for the reason is the same.

Shall come to Zion. Namely, to that place where he wished that men should call on his name, that the temple may be rebuilt and the pure worship of God restored; for, since the Jews, during the Babylonish captivity, ought to expect the same aid as had been obtained by their fathers, because God was in like manner the Redeemer of the children also, they were superior to the fathers in one respect, that God had at that time chosen Mount Zion, in which he had promised that his rest would be eternal. (Ps. cxxxii. 14.) But since the work of God, which Isaiah promises, was worthy of admiration, on this account he exhorts the people to praise and thanksgiving.

With a song. רִנָּה (*rĭnnāh*) may indeed be taken simply for "rejoicing;" but, as it frequently denotes the praise which is rendered to God when we acknowledge his benefits, I prefer to take it in that sense in this passage.[1] The mean-

[1] "J'aime mieux le prendre pour *cantique* en cest endroit-ci." "I prefer to take it for *a song* in this passage."

ing is, that there will be a great and unexpected change, so that they shall have very abundant ground of joy and thanksgiving. When he says that *joy shall be on their head*, he alludes to the chaplets of flowers with which they were wont to adorn themselves at banquets. He adds that "they shall obtain joy," which denotes that their enjoyment shall be solid and lasting. Lastly, for the purpose of amplification, he adds that all sorrow shall be banished, that they may not dread what frequently happens, that joy, by a sudden change, shall give place to mourning. (Prov. xiv. 13.) Yet the Prophet instructs them, though they groan and are sorrowful, to wait patiently for that issue which he promises.

12. *I, I am.* Here the Lord not only promises grace and salvation to the Jews, but remonstrates with them for refusing to believe him, and for valuing his power less than they ought. It is exceedingly base to tremble at the threatenings of men to such a degree as to care nothing about God's assistance; for he displays his power for this purpose, that he may at least fortify us against every attack. Accordingly, by an excessive fear of men we betray contempt of God.

Hence it is evident how sinful it is to be agitated by the terrors of men, when God calls us to repose. And indeed it is amazing ingratitude in men, who, when they hear that God is on their side, derive no hope from his magnificent promises, so as to venture boldly to exclaim, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31.) The consequence is, that when dangers arise, they are terrified and confounded, and attribute far more to the power of mortal man in attacking than to the power of God in defending. Justly, therefore, does he upbraid the Jews with not fortifying themselves by these promises, and with not rendering themselves invincible against every danger; for God is treated with the highest dishonour when we doubt his truth, that is, when we are so completely overcome by human terrors that we cannot rest on his promises.

The repetition, *I, I*, is highly emphatic. He who promises consolation is the God of truth, against whom neither the strength nor the contrivances of men will be of any avail.

When thou distrustest him, it follows that thou dost not consider who he is.

That thou shouldest be afraid of a man. He describes how frail, fading, transitory and unsubstantial is the condition of men, in order to exhibit more fully their criminal stupidity in preferring a shadow and smoke to God. He shews that men, so long as they are mindful of God, cannot be struck down by fear. Consequently, when we are stunned by dangers that assail us, it follows that we have forgotten God; and therefore he adds,—

13. *And hast forgotten Jehovah thy Maker.* It is not enough to imagine that there is some God, but we ought to acknowledge and embrace him as ours. When he calls him "Maker," this must not be understood to refer to universal creation, but to spiritual regeneration, as we have already explained under other passages. In this sense Paul calls us (τὸ ποίημα) "the workmanship of God," (Eph. ii. 10,) because he hath created us to every good work. Thus, if we remember our creation and adoption, these beginnings may encourage us to hope for continued progress, that we may not be ungrateful to God, when he has proved his veracity by undoubted experience.

Who hath stretched out the heavens and founded the earth. To the special kindness which God had exercised towards his people he likewise adds his boundless power, which he contrasts with the weakness of men, whom he formerly compared to withered grass. (Is. xl. 7.) He demonstrates that power by his works, so that they who do not perceive it must be exceedingly stupid; for we cannot turn our eyes in any direction without perceiving very abundant testimonies of divine goodness and power, which, however, are briefly described by a figure of speech in which a part is taken for the whole, when he says that it is "He who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth." It is therefore the greatest folly and indolence to forget him, for so numerous are the signs and testimonies which recall him to the remembrance of men.

And hast dreaded continually. He follows out the same comparison. "What are men," says he, "that thou shouldst

dread them, if thou compare them to God, who promises thee his assistance?" Assuredly, God is grievously blasphemed, if we refuse to believe that he is more powerful to preserve than enemies are to destroy us; and therefore the Lord bids us consider who and what he is, how vast and extensive is his power, that we may not dread the fury of a mortal man, who vanishes like a whirlwind or like smoke.

14. *The exile hasteneth to be loosed.* This verse is expounded in various ways; for some think that it refers to Cyrus, and take the word צעוה (*tzōĕh*)[1] in a transitive sense, and explain it to mean, "Causing to migrate."[2] But it is more customary to interpret it as meaning one who is imprisoned and oppressed, or an exile who wanders about without any settled abode. Now, the Jews were not only exiles but captives, so that they were not at liberty to return to their native land; and therefore I explain it as referring to the Jews.

But still there are two senses in which it may be understood, either that the Prophet reproves their excessive haste, in impatiently desiring to return, or that the Prophet means that their return to their native country is immediately at hand, that they may not sink under the discouragement of long delay; as if he had said, that the time when they must prepare for departure will speedily arrive. The second of these expositions has been more generally approved; and I adopt it the more readily, because it agrees best with the context.

But it may appear strange that he should say that the people will quickly return, since their captivity was of long duration. Yet with good reason does God say that that event will come quickly which he delays till a fit season; for, although to us it may appear to be long, yet, being appropriate and suitable, the time is short. And indeed it was a short time, if we look at the condition of that monarchy, which was so vast and strong that it appeared as if it could

[1] "Que nous avons traduit *banni*." "Which we have translated *banished*."

[2] That is, they treat it as the Kal participle of an active verb, signifying "Banishing," and not as the participle of a passive or neuter verb, signifying "Banished," or "Wandering."—*Ed.*

never be destroyed. Thus, what appears to be long in the promises of God will appear to be short, provided that we do not refuse to lift up our eyes to heaven. This meaning is confirmed by what immediately follows.

That he may not die in a pit. Such then is God's haste to come early to deliver his people; that they may come forth safely out of the dungeon. The Lord does not promise to his people some sudden assistance, that he may only bring them out of prison, but also that, after having been delivered, they may be the objects of his kindness; for he promises everything necessary for their food and support, that they may be convinced that God will always take care of them; and he is wont not only to assist his people for a moment, but to remain with them continually.

15. *And I am Jehovah thy God.* Again the Lord declares his power; for so great is the unbelief and sluggishness of men, that, although it is frequently declared, yet the very smallest temptation shews that they are not fully convinced of it. They quickly fall back upon themselves, when they are hard pressed by afflictions; and when they hear that anything is in the power of God, they do not think that it belongs to them.

Who divide the sea. He does not speak in general terms, but brings forward the instance which he had often mentioned before; for, by once redeeming the fathers, he held out to posterity the hope of eternal salvation. Justly, therefore, does he exclaim that he is the same God who long ago "divided the sea;" and next he magnifies the miracle by saying that its roaring billows were stilled at his command. (Ex. xiv. 21.) We ought to know, therefore, that there are no raging billows which God cannot allay and calm in order to deliver his Church. "It is he who," by his power, "stills the sea and makes it calm," (Job xxvi. 12,) though it rage furiously; and he likewise drives and swells its waves, when he thinks fit; though literally, as I have remarked, the Prophet alludes to the history of the deliverance from Egypt.[1]

Jehovah of hosts. The Lord is adorned with this title, that we may know how extensive is his power; and he

[1] "A l'histoire de la deliverance d'Egypte."

exhibits that power as often as he is pleased to render assistance to his Church.

16. *And I have put my words in thy mouth.* He again returns to the doctrine which he had formerly stated, namely, that the Lord comforts his Church: "I, I am he that comforteth you," (ver. 12.) So he now says that he put into the mouth of the prophets what they should say. Hence we may infer that these words do not proceed from men, who often prove false, but from "God, who cannot lie." (Tit. i. 2.) The Lord speaks to all the prophets, first to Isaiah, and then to the rest in their order; but at last we must come to Christ. These things must not be limited either to Isaiah or to Christ, but must be extended to all the prophets. The Lord wishes that believers should hear the consolation from the prophets, as if he were present and addressed them, and even declares that he speaks openly by their mouth.

Hence also we ought to conclude that none ought to come forward to comfort the Church but they who speak from the mouth of the Lord; for they who alter their own dreams, though they take shelter under the name of God, ought to be rejected. But we must understand the Prophet's meaning; for, seeing that he shews that the consciences of men always tremble, till the Lord confirm them, he instructs us to abide by this principle, that it is God who speaks by the prophets; for otherwise consciences will always remain in doubt and uncertainty. Yet the mode of expression is highly emphatic, when he repeats the commandments of God, by which he was encouraged to the execution of his office.

And in the shadow of my hand. Though he had already said this, yet the repetition is not superfluous, that we may fully believe that God will always assist his ministers, so that, relying on his immediate aid, they may be raised by him above all obstructions. Now, in order to being covered with that shadow of the Lord, two things are necessary; first, that they are certain that what they utter is the word of God, and secondly, that they do so by God's command. They who rashly put themselves forward may indeed boast

of the name of God, but in vain; for when they come to fight in earnest, they will faint. And if we have the testimony of conscience, we have no reason for entertaining doubts as to God's protection and aid, by which he will enable us to gain the victory. Next comes the object of the embassy.

That I may plant the heavens; that is, that I may restore everything to its proper order. There are, indeed, various interpretations of these words; but the true meaning appears to me to be this, that heaven and earth are said to be restored by the doctrine of salvation; because "in Christ," as Paul says, "are collected all things that are either in heaven or in earth." (Eph. i. 10.) Since the fall of the first man we see nothing but frightful confusion, which troubles even the dumb creatures, and makes them suffer, in some respects, the punishment of our sins; and, consequently, that confusion cannot be repaired but by Christ. Since therefore the whole face of the world is disfigured by frightful desolation, there are good grounds for saying that godly teachers renovate the world, as if God formed heaven and earth anew by their hand. And hence it is evident how great is the heinousness of our guilt, which has been followed by such dreadful confusion in the nature of things. Thus, "the heavens" are said to be "planted and the earth to be founded," when the Lord establishes his Church by the word; and he does this by the agency of ministers, whom he directs by his Spirit, and protects against hidden enemies and various dangers, that they may effectually accomplish what he has enjoined.

That I may say to Zion, Thou art my people. At length he shews that this aims at something higher than the visible form of the world, which shall quickly perish; namely, to excite and nourish in the hearts of believers the hope of a heavenly life. The true stability of the Church, the restoration of the world, consists in this, that the elect be gathered into the unity of faith, so that, with one consent, all may lift their hearts to God, who also invites them sweetly and gently by these words, "I am thy God." And hence we see how highly God values the salvation of the Church,

since he not only prefers it to the whole world, but even shews that the stability of the world depends upon it. We must likewise observe what is the word which the Lord enjoins to be proclaimed; for it not only lays down a rule of life, but also gives a testimony of our adoption, in which our salvation chiefly consists.

17. *Awake, awake.* The Church was about to endure grievous calamities, and therefore he fortifies her by consolation, and meets a doubt which might arise, that the Jews, being now oppressed by tyrants, saw no fulfilment of these promises. The meaning therefore is, that the Church, though afflicted and tossed in various ways, will nevertheless be set up again, so as to regain her full vigour. By the word "Awake" he recalls her, as it were, from death and the grave; as if he had said, that no ruins shall be so dismal, no desolations shall be so horrible, as to be capable of hindering God from effecting this restoration. And this consolation was highly necessary; for when grief seizes our hearts, we think that the promises do not at all belong to us; and therefore we ought frequently to call to remembrance, and to place constantly before our eyes, that it is God who speaks, and who addresses men who are not in a prosperous or flourishing condition, but fallen and dead, and whom notwithstanding he can raise up and uphold by his word; for this doctrine of salvation is intended not for those who retain their original condition, but for those who are dead and ruined.

Who hast drunk from the hand of Jehovah the cup of his wrath. There are two senses in which the term, "cup of wrath," may be understood; for sometimes the Lord is said to put into our hands a "cup of wrath," when he strikes us with some kind of giddiness, or deranges our intellect; as we see that affliction sometimes takes away men's understanding; but sometimes it is used in a simpler sense, to denote the sharp and heavy punishments by which the Lord severely chastises his people. This is evidently the meaning in which it must be taken here, as appears from the addition of the pronoun *His.* Nor is this inconsistent with what he says, that the Church was stupified and drunk; for he shews that this happened

in consequence of the Lord having severely chastised her. It is an ordinary metaphor by which the chastisement which God inflicts on his people is called a "potion,"[1] or a certain measure which he assigns to each. But whenever it relates to the elect, this term "cup" serves to express the moderation of the divine judgment; that the Lord, though he punish his people severely, still observes a limit.[2]

Pressing out the dregs of the cup of distress (or *of trembling.*) I consider the word תַּרְעֵלָה (*tărgnēlāh*) to denote "anguish" or "trembling," by which men are nearly struck dead, when they are weighed down by heavy calamities. Such persons may be called "drunk," as having exhausted all that is in the cup, because nothing can be added to their affliction and distress.

This is also denoted by another term, "pressing out." The Church is here reminded that all the evils which befall her proceed from no other source than from the hand of God, that she may not think that they happen to her by chance, or that she is unjustly afflicted. The object which the Prophet has in view is, that the people may know that they are justly punished for their sins. No one can rise up till he first acknowledge that he has fallen, or be delivered from misery till he perceive that it is by his own fault that he is miserable. In short, there can be no room for consolations till they have been preceded by the doctrine of repentance.

Dregs, therefore, must not here be understood in the same sense as in Jer. xxv. 15, where the reprobate are spoken of, whom the Lord chokes and kills by his cup, but as denoting complete and righteous punishment, to which the Lord has been pleased to assign a limit. Thus, when the Lord has inflicted on us such punishment as he thought fit, and

[1] "He sets forth God like a physician, mixing a bitter potion for Jerusalem, putting as it were into one cup all the anger he had conceived against her, and standing by to see her take it off, that not a drop should be spilt, or any of the nauseous settlings left behind: a potion so strong that it made her tremble every limb of her, and so giddy that she stood in need of one to lead her: but such were her misfortunes that none of her inhabitants were able to support her; by all which the Prophet means that her afflictions should be so great as to turn her brain, and make her sink under the load of them."—*White.*

"Pource qu'il retient son bras." "Because he restrains his arm."

puts an end to our afflictions, he declares that the "dregs" are exhausted; as we have seen before at the fortieth chapter.[1]

18. *There is no one to guide her.* He describes the sorest calamity of the Church; for the heaviest and sorest of all undoubtedly is, that she receives no sympathy or consolation from her own children. This accumulated misery is described by him, in order that, though her condition be desperate, she may still expect consolation from God, who will never disappoint his servants, though they be sunk to the depth of hell. Although the Church has been forsaken by men, and even by those whom she nourished in her bosom and carried in her arms, yet she shall receive assistance from God. No affliction more severe can befall a mother than to be deserted by her children, who ought in their turn to have treated her with kindness. Such ingratitude and want of natural affection is certainly much harder to bear than the violent and unbridled cruelty of enemies; for why does she give birth to children, and why does she bring them up, but in expectation of being supported by them in return? Since her children do not perform their duty, what remains but that she shall think that to have born and reared them has been of no advantage to her? Although therefore the Church has performed the duty of a mother, and has brought up her children to the age of maturity, yet the Prophet declares that she must not expect any assistance or consolation from ungrateful persons.

Yet his discourse conveys something more, and pronounces those children who have rendered no assistance to their mother to be bastards and reprobates, with the view of inducing her to bear the loss of them more patiently. It was sad and distressing for the Church to be deprived of all her offspring, and to be reduced to childlessness; though this has sometimes happened. But the Prophet reminds the mother that the children do not deserve that she should mourn for them, and that, on the contrary, she ought to desire additional offspring, as it is said by the Psalmist,

[1] The allusion appears to be to a different but analogous expression. See Com. on Isaiah, Vol. iii. pp. 201, 202.—*Ed.*

"The people that shall be created shall praise the Lord." (Psalm cii. 18.)

What is here described by the Prophet is entirely applicable to our own age; for many boast of being the children of the Church; but where is the man that cares about his mother's distresses? Who is grieved for her ruin? Who is moved so deeply as to put his shoulders to her support? How many betray her, and, under pretence of this title, persecute her more cruelly than open and avowed enemies? Accordingly, after all her calamities this is added as the copestone of her miseries. Moreover, they who wish to be regarded as holding the first rank in the Church, and who not only boast of being children, but vaunt of being called fathers, treacherously desert her when she implores their aid. We need not wonder, therefore, if God shall drive them out, in order to make way for the increase of his Church by lawful and dutiful children.[1]

19. *These two things have happened to thee.* Nearly the same thing was already asserted concerning Babylon, "These two things shall befall thee suddenly in one day, childlessness and widowhood." (Isaiah xlvii. 9.) But here Isaiah promises to the Church that there shall eventually be a different issue; for the Lord will rescue her from the deepest abyss. He threatens extreme wretchedness, that believers may gird themselves for patience, and not cease to send upwards prayers and supplications from the depth of their distresses. The general meaning is, that the Church shall be burdened with afflictions of every kind, so that she shall appear to be on the brink of utter ruin; because from without she shall endure very heavy calamities, and from within shall obtain no aid or sympathy from her own children. These are two very sore evils which the Prophet relates. But it appears as if the division were not quite appropriate; for, after having related one evil, that there is none *to bewail her,* he enumerates four kinds—

Desolation and destruction, and the sword and famine.

[1] "Afin de donner puis apres à son Eglise des enfans legitimes qui luy assistent." "In order afterwards to give to his Church lawful children to assist her."

Some explain it to mean that the Church is visited by famine within, and harassed by enemies without. But I interpret it differently, as I have already hinted; for it is very customary among Hebrew writers to put a question, when they wish absolutely to deny anything; and among them it is elegant, though in Greek or Latin authors it would be ungraceful. Isaiah therefore describes "two evils," one external, for both by the devastations of "war" and by "famine" they will be brought to the verge of "destruction" and "desolation," which he describes by these four classes; and another internal, because she is deprived of consolation, and "there is none to bewail her." By putting the question, "Who shall bewail her?" he affirms that she shall have no consolation; and this verse agrees with the former, in which we have already explained the design which the Prophet has in view, in describing this highly calamitous and wretched condition of the Church.

20. *Thy sons have fainted.* He describes more fully the lamentable and wretched condition of the Church, when he says that her children lie prostrate. A mother cannot be visited with any grief more bitter than to have her children slain before her eyes, and not one or two of them, but so great a number as to fill the roads with the slaughter.

As a wild bull in a net. The metaphor is taken from bears or other savage animals, by which he means that even the strongest of them have, as it were, been caught in snares.

Full of the indignation of Jehovah. By this expression he distinctly states that none of these events are accidental, lest they should suppose that any of them has happened by chance, or lest they should accuse the Lord of cruelty for having punished them severely; because his judgment is just and righteous. This is what he means, when he says that this punishment has proceeded from *the rebuke* of the Lord. Yet we must bear in mind his object which I have already mentioned, that believers ought not to throw away the hope of grace, though innumerable calamities prompt and urge them to despair.

21. *Therefore now hear this.* He now shews more plainly

the reason why he spoke of the calamities of the Church. It was, that believers might be fully persuaded that they would obtain consolation from God, though they were reduced to the extremity of distress. But why does he call the Church *wretched*, since nothing is more happy than to be God's people, and that happiness cannot be taken away by any tribulations? Not without cause is it said, "Blessed is the people whose God is Jehovah." (Ps. cxliv. 15.) I reply, she is apparently "wretched," and not in vain does the Lord address her by that name; for, as we have already said, he helps the wretched, and succours the destitute.

And drunken, not with wine.[1] When he calls her "drunken," it ought to be observed that believers never endure so patiently the chastisements which are inflicted on them as not to be sometimes stupified; but, although stupified, they ought to remember that the Lord punishes them justly, and ought to believe that the Lord will assist them. He does not speak to robust or healthy men, but to those who are feeble, wretched, prostrate, and who resemble drunken persons, and says that he brings to them consolation. Finally, by this word he soothes the grief of the Church, and shews that he preserves a limit, by which he restrains the violence even of the greatest afflictions, and restores her when ruined, as if he were raising from the dead a rotten corpse.

22. *Thus saith Jehovah.* Not at random does the Prophet add to the name Jehovah three epithets, namely, that he is the *Lord* or Defender of his Church, that he is *God*, and lastly, that he is her *Avenger*. We ought always to consider what is the nature of our relation to God; for he addresses us in a familiar manner, in consequence of having once chosen us to be his people, by uniting himself to us in an everlasting covenant. This preface encouraged the Jews, in ancient times, not to hesitate to embrace what is here promised; and at the present day the same argument applies to a new people, who have been taken under God's care and protection not less than they. The Lord declares himself to hold the office of an "Avenger," in order that, when

[1] "שכרת דבר אהר שלא מיין (*shĕkūrăth dābār ĕhād shĕllō miyăin*). Drunken with something which is not wine."—*Jarchi.*

we shall be threatened with the most alarming dangers, and when it shall appear as if all were over with us, we may betake ourselves to this anchor, that God is the "Avenger" of his people; and this ought to support us, not only when we are assailed by outward enemies, but also when we are assailed by Satan.

Behold, I have taken from thy hand. He holds out the ground of hope; for it is only by temporary stripes that the Lord chastises his Church. Hence also the Jews ought to learn that all the calamities to which they were subjected were the just reward of their transgressions; for those calamities would never come to an end but by their being reconciled to God. The general meaning is, that the wrath of the Lord will be appeased, so that he will restrain and bring to a close the chastisements which he had formerly inflicted on his Church.

The cup of thy affliction, or, *the cup of thy trembling.* We have already spoken of the metaphor of "the cup;"[1] and the explanation of it which we gave is fully confirmed by this passage, in which God calls it "the cup of his indignation," though it had made the Church to tremble, as if she had been seized with giddiness. Yet it is the same word which he formerly used, תַּרְעֵלָה, (*tărgnēlāh,*) which some translate "anguish," and others "trembling." By *dregs,* as I have said,[2] he means the full measure of vengeance with which God is satisfied on account of his fatherly kindness.

23. *And I will put it into the hand of thy oppressors.* This is another part of the consolation, in which he promises that the Lord will not only deliver the Church from those heavy distresses, but will also lay upon her enemies the calamities with which she is afflicted. If therefore we are afflicted,[3] our condition will be speedily changed, and our enemies will be severely punished. Truly, as Paul says, it is righteous with God to render tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest along with us, when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven, with the angels of his power, with flame of fire, to take vengeance on

[1] See p. 84. [2] See p. 85.
[3] "Si nous sommes persecutez." "If we are persecuted."

them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i. 6-8.) Thus the temporary punishments which God inflicts on them are the beginnings of that eternal punishment to which they shall be finally condemned.

Who said to thy soul. In order to describe more fully the insolence and haughtiness of their enemies, such as we too experience every day in our adversaries, he quotes their words, by which they slandered and insulted the unhappy children of God. Impiety is always accompanied by pride and cruelty; for, as the true knowledge of God renders men gentle, so ignorance makes them ferocious and savage. They who are ignorant of God please themselves, and pour out unmeasured reproaches against God and those who truly worship him. This truly is most wretched and base; but since he frequently permits his name to be exposed to the insults of wicked men, let us not wonder that we are assailed on account of his name; for we are not more excellent than God, and our condition ought not to be better than that of the ancient Church. David employs a different metaphor, (Ps. cxxix. 3,) when he says that the Church resembles a field which is cut and broken up by the plough; for he shews that frequently it is deeply furrowed and trodden upon, that we may not think that our condition is different.

CHAPTER LII.

1. Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

2. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, *and* sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

3. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

4. For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into

1. Excitare, excitare, indue fortitudinem tuam, Sion, indue vestes decoris tui, Ierusalem, civitas sancta; quia non fiet amplius ut veniat in te incircumcisus et immundus.

2. Excute te de pulvere, surge, sede, Ierusalem; extrica te a vinculis colli tui, captiva filia Sion.

3. Quia sic dicit Iehova: Gratis venditi estis; ideo sine pecunia redimemini.

4. Quia sic dicit Dominus Iehova: In Ægyptum olim descenderat

Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

5. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day *is* blasphemed.

6. Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I *am* he that doth speak; behold, *it is* I.

7. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

8. Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

9. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

10. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

11. Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing;* go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.

12. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel *will be* your rere-ward.

13. Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

14. As many were astonished at thee: (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men;)

15. So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had

populus meus ut peregrinaretur illic; verum Assur absque causa oppressit eum.

5. Et nunc, Quid mihi hic, dicit Iehova, ut ablatus sit populus meus gratis, et qui in eum dominantur faciant eum ululare, dicit Iehova, et jugiter tota die nomen meum contumeliæ expositum sit?

6. Propterea sciet populus meus nomen meum; propterea in die illa, quòd ego idem qui loquor; ecce, adero.

7. Quam speciosi super montes pedes annuntiantis, publicantis salutem, dicentis Sioni, Regnat Deus tuus.

8. Vox speculatorum tuorum; levaverunt vocem, pariter jubilabunt; quoniam oculo ad oculum videbunt, cum Iehova reducet Sion.

9. Laudate, exultate pariter, solitudines Ierusalem; quoniam consolatus est Iehova populum suum, redemit Ierusalem.

10. Nudavit Iehova brachium sanctitatis suæ coram oculis omnium gentium; et videbunt omnes fines terræ salutem Dei nostri.

11. Discedite, discedite, exite inde, immundum ne attingite, exite e medio ejus, mundamini qui fertis vasa Iehovæ.

12. Quoniam non in festinatione exibitis, neque in fuga erit iter vobis; quandoquidem præcedet vos Iehova, et congregabit vos Deus Israel.

13. Ecce prosperum successum habebit servus meus; exaltabitur, elevabitur, et valde sublimis erit.

14. Quemadmodum obstupuerunt super te multi, adeo deformata fuit ab hominibus species ejus, et forma ejus a filiis hominum:

15. Sic asperget gentes multas; super eum reges claudent os suum; quia quod non fuerat ipsis narratum

not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

videbunt; et quod non audierant intelligent.

1. *Awake, awake.* He confirms the former doctrine, in order still more to arouse the people who had been weighed down by grief and sorrow. These things were necessary to be added as spurs, that the doctrine might more easily penetrate into their drowsy and stupified hearts; for he addresses the Church, which appeared to be in a benumbed and drowsy condition, and bids her "awake," that she may collect her strength and revive her courage. He repeats it a second time, and with great propriety; for it is difficult to arouse and reanimate those whose hearts have been struck, and even laid prostrate, by a sense of God's anger.

Put on thy strength. As if he had said, "Formerly thou wast dejected, and wallowedst in filth and pollution; now prepare for a happy and prosperous condition, to which the Lord will restore thee." Thus he contrasts "strength" with despondency, such as is usually found when affairs are desperate; and he contrasts *garments of beauty* with filth and pollution.

For henceforth there shall not come to thee. The reason assigned by him is, that henceforth God will not permit wicked men to indulge their sinful inclinations for destroying it. Freed from their tyranny, the Church already has cause to rejoice; and security for the future holds out solid ground for joy and gladness. Yet Isaiah exhorts us to mutual congratulation when God is reconciled to his Church; and indeed if we have any piety in us, we ought to be deeply affected by her condition, that we may rejoice in her prosperity, and be grieved in her adversity.[1] In short, it ought to be the height of our gladness, as also the Psalmist says, "Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I remember not thee, and if thou be not the crown of my gladness." (Ps. cxxxvii. 6.) By the word *come*, he means what we commonly express by the phrase, (*Avoir entree,*) "to have access."

By *the uncircumcised and unclean,* he means all irreligious

[1] "Pour rire et chanter quand elle florit, et pleurer lors qu'elle est persecutee." "To laugh and sing when she is flourishing, and to weep when she is persecuted."

persons who corrupt the worship of God and oppress consciences by tyranny. It was customary to apply the term "uncircumcised" to all who were estranged from the Church, which had for its symbol "circumcision," by which all believers were distinguished. But as very many persons, though they bore this outward mark of the covenant, were not better than others, in order to remove all doubt, he added the word "unclean;" for the mark of "circumcision is nothing in itself," (Gal. v. 6,) and (unless, as Paul says, there be added purity of heart) "is even reckoned uncircumcision." (Rom. ii. 25.) Accordingly, he declares that henceforth such persons shall not be admitted into the Church, in order that, by the removal of corruptions, and the restoration of the worship of God, she may possess perfect joy. Yet I do not object to viewing these words as applied to outward foes, whom he calls by hateful names, that even the severity of the punishment may warn the Jews of the heinousness of their offences.

2. *Shake thyself from the dust; arise.* He explains more fully the deliverance of the Church, and exhibits it prominently by (ὑποτύπωσιν), "a lively description." When he bids her "shake off the dust and arise," let us not on that account think that our liberty is in our power, so that we can obtain it whenever we think fit; for it belongs to God alone to raise us from the dust, to lift us up when we are prostrate, and, by breaking or loosing our chains, to set us at liberty. Why then does the Prophet make use of the imperative mood? for it is unreasonable to demand what we cannot perform. I reply, the imperative form of address has a much more powerful tendency to arouse than if he had employed plain narrative; and therefore he declares that, when God shall have restored her to her former freedom, she shall come out of the mire.

Sit, O Jerusalem. The word "sit" denotes a flourishing condition, and is contrasted with the word "to lie," which denotes the lowest calamity. Sometimes indeed it means "to be prostrate," as when he formerly said to Babylon, "sit in the dust." (Isa. xlvii. 1.) But here the meaning is different; for, after ordering her to arise, he likewise adds,

"that she may sit;" that is, that she may no longer lie down, but may regain her former condition, and not be in future laid prostrate by enemies.

3. *For thus saith Jehovah.* This verse has been badly expounded by many commentators, who have here chosen to enter into philosophical subtleties; for they have dreamed of many things at variance with the Prophet's meaning. It agrees with what he had formerly stated, "To which of my creditors have I sold you?" (Isa. l. 1.) For here, in the same manner, he says, "*Ye have been sold for nought;*" as if he had said that he has received no price, and is under no obligations to a creditor who can claim them as having been purchased by him. This tends greatly to confirm the promise; because the Jews might entertain doubts of the liberty which was promised to them, in consequence of their having been long held in possession by the Babylonians, who were the most powerful of all nations. The Lord meets this doubt. "I did not sell or make a conveyance of you to them; for nought were ye sold; and therefore I can justly claim you as my property and sell you. Do not then consider how great are your difficulties, when I promise you liberty, and do not reason on this matter by human arguments; for the Babylonians have no right to detain you, and cannot prevent your being set at liberty.

Therefore shall ye be redeemed without money. Lastly, as he had formerly said, that he is not like a spendthrift, who is compelled to sell his children, or offer them in payment, so in this passage he declares that "for nought he sold" and gave them up to their enemies, for no other reason than because they had provoked him by their sins; and therefore that there will be no greater difficulty in delivering them than in giving them up to their enemies.

Some explain it more ingeniously thus, that Christ has redeemed us by free grace. This doctrine must indeed be maintained, but does not agree with the Prophet's meaning, who intended to correct the distrust of the Jews, that they might have no doubt as to their being set at liberty. Let it suffice to know, that when God shall be pleased to deliver his people, it will not be necessary to make a pecuniary

bargain with the Babylonians, whom, in spite of their opposition, he will have no difficulty in driving out of their unjust possession.

4. *Into Egypt my people went down aforetime.* Here also the commentators touch neither heaven nor earth; for the Jews dream of three captivities, and Christians differ from them by thinking that this denotes a third captivity, which shall be under Antichrist, and from which Christ will deliver them. But the Prophet's meaning, in my opinion, is quite different; for he argues from the less to the greater, by quoting the instance of the Egyptian captivity, from which the people were formerly recalled by the wonderful power of God. (Ex. xiv. 28.) The argument therefore stands thus: "If the Lord punished the Egyptians because their treatment of his people was harsh and unjust, (Gen. xv. 14,) much more will he punish the Babylonians, who have cruelly tyrannized over them."

But the Assyrian has oppressed them without cause. There was much greater plausibility in Pharaoh's claim of dominion over the Jews than in that of the Babylonians; for Jacob, having voluntarily come down to Egypt with his family, (Gen. xlvi. 5,) undoubtedly became subject to the power of Pharaoh, who, in return for the kindness received from Joseph,[1] had assigned to him a large country and abundant pasturage. Pharaoh's successors, ungrateful and forgetful of the benefit conferred on them by Joseph, afflicted all the posterity of Jacob in various ways. This ingratitude and cruelty the Lord severely punished. But far more base and savage was the wickedness of the Babylonians, who drove the Jews out of a lawful possession, and dragged them into bondage. If then the Lord could not bear the Egyptians, who were unthankful and ruled by unjust laws, though in other respects they had a just title to possession, much less will he endure the violent and cruel Babylonians, who have no right to govern his people and oppress them by tyranny.

By "the Assyrian," he means the Babylonians, who were united under the same monarchy with the Assyrians; but

[1] "En recognoissance du bien que Joseph avoit fait au royaume." "In gratitude for the benefit which Joseph had conferred on the kingdom."

he takes special notice of "the Assyrian," because he was the first that grievously distressed the Jews, and that prepared the way for this captivity.

5. *What have I here?* He follows out and confirms what I have already said, that it is not reasonable that he should silently permit his people to be any longer oppressed. By these words he reproves, in some measure, his own delay; as if he had said, "Shall I not stretch out my hand? Shall I not avenge my people? If Pharaoh did not hinder me, though he was a lawful master, shall the violence of robbers hinder me?" He next enumerates the reasons which ought to move him to bring back the people.

That my people should be carried away for nought. There must be understood an implied contrast to the participle "carried away;" for the Egyptians did not "carry away" Jacob by force; he came down to it of his own accord when he was pressed by famine, yet he was delivered from it;[1] how much more shall he be rescued out of the hand of those who tore him from his native country, and carried him by violence into captivity?

That they should cause them to howl. In order to express more forcibly the baseness of this conduct, he says that they are constrained to howl without ceasing. Some translate the verb as neuter;[2] but I think that it is intended to express the strength of their hatred, and therefore I consider it to be an active verb, expressive of the violence which the Babylonians exercised towards the Jews; for they not only ruled unjustly over them, but also treated them harshly. To "howl" is more than to sigh or weep; for there is reason to believe that the pain which sends forth loud and strong cries is exceedingly severe. The metaphor is taken from wild beasts, and denotes extreme despair.

The third and principal reason why the Lord will deliver his people is, that *his name is continually exposed to the reproach* and blasphemy of wicked men. For the sake of his own honour the Lord preserves the Church, and defends

[1] "Toutes fois sa posterité en a esté delivree." "Yet his posterity was delivered from it."

[2] That is, that the verb means "to howl," instead of "to cause to howl." —*Ed.*

the pure worship of his name. Because wicked men seize on the Church's calamitous state as a reason for blasphemy, and insolently mock God, with good reason does he say, that by delivering his people he will plead his own cause. I do not here relate the various interpretations, or stay to refute them; for it will be enough for me to have briefly explained the Prophet's real meaning.

6. *Therefore shall my people know.* In this verse he concludes what he had glanced at in the two preceding verses, that at length the people must be redeemed by God, who cannot be unlike himself; for, if he redeemed the fathers, if he always assisted the Church, their posterity, whom he has adopted in the same manner, will never be suffered by him to be overwhelmed. We ought carefully to observe the word "know;" for to "know the name of the Lord" is to lay aside every false opinion, and to know him from his word, which is his true image, and next from his works. We must not imagine God according to the fancy of men, but must comprehend him as he declares himself to us. The Lord, therefore, concludes that he will actually assist them, and will fulfil all that he has promised, that the people may know that their hope has not been without foundation, and that they may be more and more confirmed in the knowledge of his name. We must keep in remembrance what we have elsewhere said about experimental knowledge, which confirms the truth of the word.

That it is I who speak. The verb "to speak" relates to the promises. הִנֵּנִי, (*hinnī,*) *Behold I,* relates to actual power; as if he had said, "Although now there be nothing more than that there sound in your ears the words by which I promise what is hardly probable, yet you shall speedily obtain it; for I will actually accomplish what I promise." Hence we ought to draw the universal doctrine, that the promises of God and the fulfilment of them are linked together by an indissoluble bond. Whenever, therefore, Satan tempts and urges us to distrust, as if God had forsaken and abandoned us, we must come back to this point, and place our confidence in God, who never promises anything in vain. "If hitherto he does not perform, yet he will assist in due time."

7. *How beautiful upon the mountains.* The Prophet again confirms believers as to the certainty of the word of God, that they may be fully persuaded that they shall be restored to their former liberty, and may comfort their hearts by assured hope during that hard bondage. He pronounces magnificent commendations on this message, that believers may be convinced that God holds out to them, in their calamity, the hope of future salvation; and indeed, when God speaks, they ought to accept the consolation, that, relying on it, they may calmly and patiently wait for the fulfilment of the promise. Thus, in order that believers may bridle their desires by patience, he splendidly adorns the word of God. "Will you be so ungrateful as not to rest satisfied with that incomparable treasure of the word which contains so many benefits? Will you give way to unruly passions? Will you complain of God?" He wishes to guard against distrust the people who were drawn away by various allurements, and did not fully rely on the word of God; and therefore he praises the excellence of the doctrine, and shews that the Lord bestows upon "us more than we can say or think." (Eph. iii. 20.)

He states that he does not now speak of every kind of doctrine, but of that which is adapted to consolation, and therefore shews that "beautiful" and lovely is the approach of those who bring consolation from the mouth of God, which can not only alleviate our grief, but even impart to us abundant joy. Here he speaks of the doctrine of salvation, and consequently says that *peace, happiness, salvation,* is proclaimed. By the word "peace" he denotes a prosperous and happy condition, as we have already in other passages explained fully the signification of this term.

That saith to Zion. Hence we infer what is the beginning of that doctrine which Isaiah preaches, and what we ought chiefly to desire, namely, that the kingdom of God may be erected among us; for until he reign among us, everything must go ill with us, and therefore we must be miserable, as, on the other hand, when God is pleased to take care of us, this of itself is the chief part of salvation; and this, too, is the only way of obtaining peace, though the state of affairs

be ruinous and desperate. And let us remember that this message is sent to the Church; for it cannot apply to heathens that know not God.

Paul quotes this passage, in order to prove that the preaching of the Gospel proceeds not from men but from God, and that the ministers who bring the message of salvation are sent by him. He employs this chain of reasoning,—"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. But it is impossible for any one to call on God till he know him; for there can be no entrance to calling on him till it is opened up by faith, that, embracing God as our Father, we may familiarly pour our cares into his bosom. Now, the foundation of it is doctrine, by which the Lord has revealed himself to us, and for that purpose employs the agency and ministry of men. Therefore he adds, lastly, that there will be none to preach till he be sent by God." (Rom. x. 15.)

But it may be thought that Paul tortures the Prophet's words; for Isaiah does not say that God sends ministers, but that their approach and presence is desirable. I reply, Paul took this principle for granted, that nothing is desirable but what comes from God. But whence comes salvation? From men? No; for none but God can be the author of such a distinguished benefit. Justly, therefore, does he conclude that it proceeds from God, and not from man.

8. *The voice of thy watchmen.* He continues his argument; for he shews that there shall be such a restoration of the people, that the messengers shall venture boldly to proclaim it. To *lift up the voice* has the same meaning with the phrase, "on the mountains," which he formerly employed. (Verse 7.) The matter will not be hidden, but so clear and evident as to draw forth universal admiration. They who speak of what is doubtful matter mutter inaudibly,[1] and do not venture to "lift up the voice;" but here there will be nothing doubtful or uncertain.

The Prophet borrowed the metaphor from sentries which are commonly placed in cities, though the designation of "watchmen" is usually given to all Prophets, because they are placed, as it were, on watch-towers, to keep watch over

[1] "Murmurent entre les dents." "Mutter between the teeth."

the safety of the people. When he says that they shall lift up the voice, he means that there will be silence during the captivity, because the voice of the Prophets shall not be heard; for although they warn every one privately, yet there will be no freedom of speech. Hence also Jeremiah says, "I will put my mouth in the dust." (Lam. iii. 29.) But when the Lord shall be pleased to lead forth the people, the mouth of watchmen, who were formerly dumb, shall be opened to proclaim that they are at liberty to return; for they will not speak within private walls, or impart moderate consolation, but will openly proclaim that salvation. On this subject I have spoken fully at the beginning of the fortieth chapter.[1]

Eye to eye; that is, openly. This extends, indeed, to spiritual conversion; but let us not on that account depart from the literal sense, so as not to include also the benefit which the Lord conferred on the ancient people; for, when he restored the Jews to liberty, and employed the ministry of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, these things were fulfilled. Yet at the same time they ought to be continued down to the coming of Christ, by which the Church was gathered out of all parts of the world. But we ought also to go forward to Christ's last coming, by which all things shall be perfectly restored.

9. *Praise ye, rejoice together.* He exhorts believers to thanksgiving, but chiefly confirms them in the hope and confidence of this salvation; as if the actual enjoyment of it already called them to thank God for it.[2] We are not sufficiently moved, when the Lord testifies that he will assist us, and think that we are deceived, if he do not actually shew it. On this account the Prophets insist much on strengthening the hearts of believers, and placing the fact almost before their eyes. Although it appears to be unreasonable and inappropriate to prescribe a song of joy in the midst of grief, yet we have elsewhere seen that this form of expression is well fitted to arouse those who groan under the burden of sorrow, fear, and cares.

Ye wildernesses of Jerusalem. He calls them "wilder-

[1] See Com. on Isaiah, Vol. iii. p. 197.

[2] "A en remercier Dieu."

nesses" or waste places "of Jerusalem," that, notwithstanding its ruin and destruction, they might still hope that it would be restored. And this appellation is better adapted for shaking off fear than if he had called her prosperous or flourishing; for, in consequence of their condition being very wretched, nothing would have led them to think that these promises related to them except a description of their misery, against which they needed to be fortified, in order that, though they beheld nothing but desolation and hideous ruin, still they might look for restoration with assured confidence.

For Jehovah hath comforted his people. The Lord hath changed the mourning of the people into joy, and out of captivity hath made them free. Yet some person will say[1] that this had not yet happened. But in the promises of God, as in a mirror, we ought to behold those things which are not yet visible to our eyes, even though they appear to us to be contrary to reason.

He hath redeemed Jerusalem. Here we see that to deliver the Church is God's own work. And if we ought to judge thus of the redemption from Babylon, which was but of a shadowy nature, what shall we say of the spiritual redemption? Can it be ascribed to men without grossly insulting God? As it belongs to God alone to deliver the Church, so to him it likewise belongs to defend its liberty.

10. *Jehovah hath made bare the arm of his holiness.* The Prophet has borrowed this comparison from soldiers who stretch out their arms when they make ready for the battle. To "make bare" does not here mean to hold out the naked arm, but to exert it; because, when we sit in idleness, we either have our arms folded or conceal them; and in like manner, we conceive of God according to the grossness of our senses, and think that, like a wearied or indolent man, he does not move a finger till he publicly displays his power.

The Prophet calls it "the arm of holiness," because he intended to display his power for the salvation of the people. This implies a mutual relation between God and the Church which the Lord has consecrated to himself. True, "he maketh bare his arm" in the government of the whole world;

[1] "Quelqu'un dira."

but he does not call it "the arm of holiness," as in this passage, when he renders peculiar assistance to his Church. There are two points of view in which the power of God ought to be regarded; first, universally, in preserving all the creatures; next, specially, in defending the Church; for there is a peculiar care which he exercises about his own people, and which the rest do not share with them.

Before the eyes of all nations. He means that this deliverance shall be worthy of so great admiration that it shall be visible even to the blind. The extension of this magnificent spectacle to the very ends of the earth makes it evident that the Prophet does not speak of the return of the people, which would take place a few years afterwards, but of the restoration of the whole Church. This prophecy is maliciously restricted by the Jews to the deliverance from Babylon, and is improperly restricted by Christians to the spiritual redemption which we obtain through Christ; for we must begin with the deliverance which was wrought under Cyrus, (2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23,) and bring it down to our own time. Thus the Lord began to display his power among the Medes and Persians, but afterwards he made it visible to all the nations.

11. *Depart ye, depart ye.* He now exhorts the people to be always ready to set out, and at the same time to bear their misery with patience. As the excessive haste of the people needed to be restrained, so it was also proper to shake off their slothfulness; for, before the time of deliverance arrived, they burned with extravagant eagerness to depart; but when the period of the captivity was fulfilled, they had grown languid through long delay, and had thrown away all hope and wish to return, so that there were few who returned to Judea.[1] They had mingled with the Babylonians, whose customs had captivated and depraved them so much that they disregarded their native country; and therefore they needed to be aroused and admonished, that they might not lose heart through long expectation, and might not suffer

[1] "Tellement que le nombre de ceux qui revindrent en Judee fut bien petit." "So that the number of those who returned to Judea was very small."

themselves to be corrupted by the pollutions of the Babylonians.

Touch not what is unclean.[1] This expresses more clearly what we have already said. He bids them keep themselves pure and free from the defilements with which the Babylonians polluted themselves; for there was a risk of their being corrupted by the pollutions of the Gentiles, as we are all prone to evil, and easily led away by bad examples. Accordingly, he exhorts them, though they are captives, not to do anything for the purpose of pleasing their masters, or of having their condition improved; not to allow themselves to be drawn aside from the pure worship of God; not to be polluted by their idolatries; not to pretend that they worship idols or approve of their religion; for this is detestable "uncleanness," which the Prophet bids them shun. Captives and those who groan under tyranny meet with temptations of this kind, under which they frequently sink so as to allow themselves to do many things that are unlawful and base, under the pretence of wishing to mitigate the rage of tyrants. But how frivolous their excuse is we see in this passage; for the Prophet does not exhort the Jews to be clean when they shall be free, but so long as they shall be held captive, and even when their life shall be in danger. These words undoubtedly relate to us also, whom Paul exhorts to be unpolluted, not only "in spirit," but also "in the flesh." (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of Jehovah. This exhortation is especially directed to the priests and Levites, who, being standard-bearers, ought to maintain greater integrity; not that others have a right to pollute themselves, but he addresses them chiefly, that they may give an example to others, to whom they have been appointed to be guides. Besides, we must bear in remembrance what we have already seen, and what Isaiah will again repeat at the end of this book, that there will be a new priesthood among a redeemed people. (Is. lxvi. 21.)

Yet I approve of the simple meaning, that the Levites and ministers of the temple are put, by way of eminence, (κατ'

[1] "Ne touchez point la souillure." "Touch not defilement."

ἐξοχὴν,) for the whole of the people. This doctrine, therefore, relates in the present day, not only to ministers of the word, but to all Christians, who are also called "a royal priesthood," (1 Peter ii. 9,) and not only are appointed to carry the vessels of the temple, but are themselves "temples of God." (1 Cor. iii. 16, and vi. 19.) Thus Ezekiel has predicted that at the restoration of the Church the Levites shall be high priests, and the whole people shall be admitted into the order of the Levites. Seeing, therefore, that the Lord has raised all to so high a rank of dignity, it follows that this "cleanness" is demanded from all without exception; and on this account also Paul has applied this passage to the whole Church.

12. *For not in haste shall ye go out.* The Prophet again magnifies that benefit of redemption, for it appeared to be incredible, so deep was the despair with which almost all of them had been seized; for he chiefly addresses those who would be led into captivity, that they might not lose courage in that wretched condition. He promises that this deliverance shall not resemble a flight such as that of Egypt; for there is an implied contrast between the deliverance from Egypt and the deliverance from Babylon. They fled "by night" out of Egypt, (Ex. xii. 31,) having pretended that they were only performing "a journey of three days to offer sacrifice to God." (Ex. v. 3.) They went out "with haste" (Ex. xii. 33) and bustle, as they were told to do, and Pharaoh pursued them in their journey and attempted to destroy them. But the Prophet declares that the present case shall be totally different, and that they shall go away like conquerors, so that none shall venture to give them any annoyance, or, as we commonly say, "They will go out with flying colours," (*Ils s'en iront à enseigne desployee,*) so that this deliverance will be more excellent and wonderful.

Jehovah will go before you; that is, will be the leader of your journey. It will be said that God was also the leader of his ancient people when he led them out of Egypt. This is undoubtedly true; but he did not at that time display his majesty, as now, when, like a general, he brought back his army, after having vanquished his enemies.

And the God of Israel will assemble you. The word "assemble" will confirm the interpretation now given; for there will be no scattering such as usually takes place when men are under the influence of terror, nor will they wander about here and there, but will march, as under banners, in a regular and ordinary manner. As if he had said, "God will bring you out as a band or army drawn up; one shall not follow another, like those who steal away secretly; but ye shall be openly gathered in troops, and shall depart without any fear. None shall molest you; for you will be assembled under God as your leader, that you may return into your native country.

13. *Behold, my servant shall have prosperous success.*[1] After having spoken of the restoration of the Church, Isaiah passes on to Christ, in whom all things are gathered together. Some explain יַשְׂכִּיל (*yăshkīl*) to mean shall "deal prudently;" but, as it is immediately added that *he shall be exalted,* the context appears to demand that we shall rather understand it to denote "prosperous success," for שָׂכַל (*shākăl*) also signifies "to be prosperous." He speaks, therefore, of the prosperity of the Church; and as this was not visible, he draws their attention to the supreme King, by whom all things shall be restored, and bids them wait for him. And here we ought carefully to observe the contrasts which the Prophet lays down; for the mightiness of this king whom the Lord will exalt is contrasted by him with the wretched and debased condition of the people, who were almost in despair. He promises that this king will be the head of the people, so that under him as the leader the people shall flourish, though they be now in a state of the deepest affliction and wretchedness; because he shall have a prosperous course.

He calls Christ "his Servant," on account of the office committed to him. Christ ought not to be regarded as a

[1] "Here some begin the 53d chapter, and Salmeron says it is so divided in some copies which he had seen; the subject is new, and has nothing 'which smacks of Babylon,' (quod Babylonium olet,) according to the expression of Sanctius, and is to be literally understood of the Messiah, as all expositors that I have met with agree, except Grotius, who thinks the words may in the first lower sense of them be understood of Jeremiah the prophet, considered as a type of Christ."—*White.*

private individual, but as holding the office to which the Father has appointed him, to be leader of the people and restorer of all things; so that whatever he affirms concerning himself we ought to understand as belonging also to us. Christ has been given to us, and therefore to us also belongs his ministry, for the Prophet might have said, in a single word, that Christ will be exalted and will be highly honoured; but, by giving to him the title of "Servant," he means that he will be exalted for our sake.

14. *As many.* He makes use of an anticipation; for the exalted state of Christ was not visible at first sight, and on this pretence it might be rejected. On this account, he informs them that Christ must first be rejected and humbled, and anticipates that doubt which might have arisen from his singularly debased and unseemly condition. As if he had said, "There is no reason why men should be shocked at that unseemliness and disgrace which will be speedily followed by eternal happiness."

So marred by men. I have translated כֵּן (*kēn*) as meaning *so;* for it is a mistake to suppose that it opens the second part of the comparison.[1] I consider מֵאִישׁ (*mēīsh*) to mean "by men;" for I do not consider מ (*mem*) to be a particle denoting comparison, as others explain it; that is "more than" men, or "beyond" what is usually found among men; but I adopt a simpler meaning, which is, that Christ was disfigured among men, or that his beauty was defaced by the perverse judgment of men.

Were amazed.[2] This "amazement" is considered by some commentators to denote the astonishment with which men were seized on account of the miracles performed by Christ, and next, that, when he must come to the cross, he was immediately rejected by them. But they have not caught the Prophet's meaning; for he says that Christ will be such that all men will be shocked at him. He came into the world so

[1] Our author's meaning is, that he has rendered the clause, "He was so (much) marred," while others render it, "*So* he was marred;" making the *So* to correspond to the *As* in the former clause, which he pronounces to be a mistake.—*Ed.*

[2] "Comme plusieurs t'ont eu en horreur." "As many were shocked at thee."

as to be everywhere despised; his glory lay hid under the humble form of the flesh; for though a majesty worthy of "the only-begotten Son of God" (John i. 14) shone forth in him, yet the greater part of men did not see it, but, on the contrary, they despised that deep abasement which was the veil or covering of his glory.

The cause of their astonishment was this, that he dwelt among men without any outward shew; and the Jews did not think that the Redeemer would come in that condition or attire. When he came to be crucified, their horror was greatly increased. Paul describes this humiliation and subsequent exaltation of Christ, when he says, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to make himself equal to God, but emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant, made in the likeness of man, and found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, being made obedient even to death, and the death of the cross. Wherefore also God hath raised him to the highest exaltation, and hath given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus should bow every knee of those that are in heaven and in earth and in hell; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philip. ii. 6-11.) It was therefore necessary that Christ should first be humbled and covered with shame, and that exaltation to which he was about to be raised was not all at once visible; but the shame of the cross was followed by a glorious resurrection attended by the highest honour.

15. *So shall he sprinkle many nations.* Some explain it, "Shall cause to drop," which they take to be a metaphorical expression for "to speak." But since נזה signifies "to sprinkle," and is commonly found to have this sense in Scripture, I choose rather to adopt this interpretation. He means that the Lord will pour out his Word over "many nations." He next mentions the effect of doctrine, that *kings shall shut their mouth*, that is, in token of astonishment, but a different kind of astonishment from that which he formerly described. Men "shut their mouths," and are struck with bewilderment, when the vast magnitude of the subject is

such that it cannot be expressed, and that it exceeds all power of language.

What they have not heard. He means that this astonishment will not arise merely from Christ's outward appearance, but, on the contrary, from the preaching of the Gospel; for, though he had risen from the dead, yet all would have thought that he was still a dead man, if the glory of his resurrection had not been proclaimed. By the preaching of the Gospel, therefore, were revealed those things which formerly had neither been seen nor heard; for this doctrine was conveyed to kings and nations that were very far off, and even to the very ends of the world.

Paul quotes this passage, and shews that it was fulfilled in his ministry, and glories on this ground, that he proclaimed the doctrine of the Gospel to those who had never heard of it at all. (Rom. xv. 21.) This belongs to the office of an Apostle, and not to the office of every minister. He means that the kingdom of Christ is more extensive than merely to embrace Judea, and that it is not now confined within such narrow limits; for it was proper that it should be spread through all nations, and extended even to the ends of the world. The Jews had heard something of Christ from the Law and the Prophets, but to the Gentiles he was altogether unknown; and hence it follows that these words relate strictly to the Gentiles.

They shall understand. By this word he shews that faith consists in certainty and clear understanding. Wherever, therefore, knowledge of this kind is wanting, faith is unquestionably wanting. Hence it is evident how idle is the notion of the Papists about implicit faith, which is nothing else than gross ignorance, or rather a mere creature of imagination.

CHAPTER LIII.

1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

2. For he shall grow up before

1. Quis credet auditui nostro? et brachium Iehovæ cui (*ad verbum, super quem*) revelatum est?

2. Ascendet tamen sicut virgul-

him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

3. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were *our* faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

10. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall

tum coram eo, et sicut radix e terra deserta. Non forma ei, neque decor. Videbimus eum; et non aspectus, ut desideremus eum.

3. Despectus et rejectus inter homines, vir dolorum, peritus infirmitatis; quasi abscondimus faciem ab eo, et nihili reputavimus eum.

4. Sane languores nostros ipse tulit, et dolores nostros ipse portavit; et nos existimavimus eum percussum, vulneratum a Deo et humiliatum.

5. Atqui ipse vulneratus est propter iniquitates nostras, attritus est propter peccata nostra. Castigatio pacis nostræ super eum, et in livore ejus sanatio (*vel, medela*) nobis.

6. Omnes nos tanquam oves erravimus, quisque in viam suam declinavit. Et Iehova traduxit in eum nostras omnium iniquitates.

7. Mulctatus est, et afflictus, (*vel, oppressus,*) nec aperuit os suum. Quasi pecus ad mactationem ducetur, et tanquam ovis coram tonsoribus suis obmutescet, nec aperiet os suum.

8. E carcere et judicio sublatus est, et generationem ejus quis enarrabit? Quoniam succisus est e terra viventium; propter transgressionem populi mei plaga illi.

9. Et exposuit impiis sepulchrum ejus, et diviti mortem ejus; quamvis iniquitatem non fecerit, nec fuerit dolos in ore ejus.

10. Voluit tamen Iehova conterere eum, infirmitati subjicere. Cum posuerit in sacrificium animam suam, videbit semen, prorogabit dies, et voluntas Iehovæ in manu ejus prosperabitur.

11. E labore animæ suæ videbit, et saturabitur; et doctrina sua (*vel, cognitione sui*) justificabit justus servus meus multos; quia iniquitates eorum ipse portabit.

12. Propterea distribuam illi partem cum magnis, et cum robustis

divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

spolia dividet. Quoniam profudit in mortem animam suam, et cum iniquis reputatus est; ipse peccatum multorum tulit, et pro iniquis oravit.

1. *Who will believe our report?* This division, or rather dismemberment, of the chapter, ought to be disregarded; for it ought to have begun with the thirteenth verse of the former chapter, and these words ought to be connected with what goes before.[1] Here the Prophet pauses, as it were, in the middle of his discourse; for, having formerly said that the name of Christ would be everywhere proclaimed, and would be revealed to unknown nations, and yet would have so mean an aspect that it might appear as if these things were fabulous, he breaks off his discourse, and exclaims that "Nobody will believe those things." At the same time, he describes his grief, that men are so unbelieving as to reject their salvation.

Thus, it is a holy complaint made by one who wished that Christ should be known by all, and who, notwithstanding of this, sees that there are few who believe the Gospel, and therefore groans and cries out, "Who hath believed our report?" Let us therefore groan and complain along with the Prophet, and let us be distressed with grief when we see that our labour is unprofitable, and let us complain before God; for godly ministers must be deeply affected, if they wish to perform their work faithfully. Isaiah declares that there will be few that submit to the Gospel of Christ; for, when he exclaims, "Who will believe the preaching?" he means that of those who hear the Gospel scarcely a hundredth person will be a believer.

Nor does he merely speak of himself alone, but like one who represents all teachers. Although therefore God gives

[1] "While most modern writers detach the three preceding verses and prefix them to this chapter, Hitzig goes to the opposite extreme of saying that the writer here begins afresh, without any visible connection with the previous context. Ewald more reasonably makes this a direct continuation, but observes a change of tone, from that of joyous confidence to that of penitent confession, on the part of the believing Jews, in reference to their former incredulity."—*Alexander.*

many ministers, few will hold by their doctrine; and what then will happen when there are no ministers? Do we wonder that the greatest blindness reigns there? If cultivated ground is unfruitful, what shall we look for from a soil that is uncultivated and barren? And yet it does not detract anything from the Gospel of Christ, that there are few disciples who receive it; nor does the small number of believers lessen its authority or obscure its infinite glory; but, on the contrary, the loftiness of the mystery is a reason why it scarcely obtains credit in the world. It is reckoned to be folly, because it exceeds all human capacities.

To whom (literally, *on whom*) *is the arm of Jehovah revealed?* In this second clause he points out the reason why the number of believers will be so small. It is, because no man can come to God but by an extraordinary revelation of the Spirit. To suppose that by the word "Arm" Christ is meant, is, in my opinion, a mistake. It assigns the cause why there are so few that believe; and that is, that they cannot attain it by the sagacity of their own understanding. This is a remarkable passage, and is quoted by John and Paul for that purpose. "Though Jesus," said John, "had performed many miracles in their presence, they believed not in him, that the saying of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (John xii. 37, 38.) And Paul says, "But they do not all believe the Gospel; for Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (Rom. x. 16.) Both of them declare that there will be no reason to wonder, if that which was long ago foretold shall happen; and they do so for the purpose of removing offence which might have arisen from the revolt of that nation, which ought to have acknowledged Christ, but obstinately resisted him.

Isaiah does not include merely the men of his own time, but all posterity to the end of the world; for, so long as the reign of Christ shall endure, this must be fulfilled; and therefore believers ought to be fortified by this passage against such a scandal. These words refute the ignorance of those who think that faith is in the power of every person, because preaching is common to all. Though it is suffi-

ciently evident that all are called to salvation, yet the Prophet expressly states that the external voice is of no avail, if it be not accompanied by a special gift of the Spirit. And whence proceeds the difference, but from the secret election of God, the cause of which is hidden in himself?

2. *Yet he shall grow up before him as a twig.* This verse refers to what was formerly said, that Christ will at first have no magnificence or outward display among men; but that before God he will nevertheless be highly exalted, and will be held in estimation. Hence we see that we must not judge of the glory of Christ by human view, but must discern by faith what is taught us concerning him by the Holy Scriptures; and therefore the phrase "before him," is here contrasted with human senses, which cannot comprehend that lofty greatness. Almost the same metaphor was used by the Prophet, (Is. xi. 1,) when he said, "A branch shall spring out of the stock of Jesse;" for the house of David was like a dry stock, in which no vigour and no comeliness was visible, and on that account is there called not a royal house, but "Jesse," a name which bore no celebrity. Only the Prophet adds here,—

In a desert land; by which he means that Christ's power of springing up will not be derived from the sap of the earth, as in trees, but contrary to the ordinary course of nature. They who in this passage speculate about the virgin Mary, and suppose that she is called a desert land, because she conceived by the Holy Ghost, and not by ordinary generation, speak beside the purpose; for the present subject is not the birth of Christ, but his whole reign. He says that it will resemble a twig springing out of a dry soil, which looks as if it could never become large. If we take into account the whole method of establishing his kingdom, and the agency which he employed, and how feeble were its beginnings, and how many foes it encountered, we shall easily understand that all these things were fulfilled as they had been foretold. What sort of men were the Apostles that they should subdue so many kings and nations by the sword of the word? Are they not justly compared to offshoots? Thus the Prophet shews by what means the kingdom of Christ must be

set up and established, that we may not judge of it by human conceptions.

He hath no form nor comeliness. This must be understood to relate not merely to the person of Christ, who was despised by the world, and was at length condemned to a disgraceful death; but to his whole kingdom, which in the eyes of men had no beauty, no comeliness, no splendour, which, in short, had nothing that could direct or captivate the hearts of men to it by its outward shew. Although Christ arose from the dead, yet the Jews always regarded him as a person who had been crucified and disgraced, in consequence of which they haughtily disdained him.

3. *Despised and rejected.* This verse conveys the same statement as the preceding, namely, that Christ will be "rejected" by men, in consequence of their beholding in him nothing but grief and infirmity. These things needed to be often repeated to the Jews, that they might not form a false conception of Christ and his kingdom; for, in order to know his glory, we must proceed from his death to his resurrection. Many stumble at his death, as if he had been vanquished and overwhelmed by it; but we ought to contemplate his power and majesty in the resurrection; and if any one choose to begin with the resurrection, he will not follow the order laid down by the Prophet, nor comprehend the Lord's strength and power.

We hid the face from him. Not without reason does he use the first person, *we;* for he declares that there will be a universal judgment; and no man will ever be able to comprehend it by his own understanding till the Lord correct and form him anew by his Spirit. Although he appears chiefly to censure the Jews, who ought not to have so haughtily rejected the Son of God promised and offered to them, and therefore reckons himself as one of the number, because he was an individual belonging to that nation; yet let us learn from this passage that all men are accursed and condemned for ingratitude in despising Christ, because they do not even consider him to be worthy of being looked at, but turn away their eyes as if from something detestable.

4. *Surely he carried our sicknesses.* The particle אכן

(*ākēn*) is not only a strong affirmation, but is likewise equivalent to *for*, and assigns a reason of something which went before, and which might have been thought new and strange; for it is a monstrous thing that he to whom God has given supreme authority over all the creatures should be thus trampled on and scorned; and if the reason were not assigned, it would have been universally pronounced to be ridiculous. The reason, therefore, of the weakness, pains, and shame of Christ is, that "he carried our sicknesses."

Matthew quotes this prediction, after having related that Christ cured various diseases; though it is certain that he was appointed not to cure bodies, but rather to cure souls; for it is of spiritual disease that the Prophet intends to speak. But in the miracles which Christ performed in curing bodies, he gave a proof of the salvation which he brings to our souls. That healing had therefore a more extensive reference than to bodies, because he was appointed to be the physician of souls; and accordingly Matthew applies to the outward sign what belonged to the truth and reality.

We thought him to be smitten, wounded by God, and afflicted. In this second clause he shews how great was the ingratitude and wickedness of the people, who did not know why Christ was so severely afflicted, but imagined that God smote him on account of his own sins, though they knew that he was perfectly innocent, and his innocence was attested even by his judge. (Matt. xxvii. 24; Luke xxiii. 4, 14, 22; John xviii. 38.) Since therefore they know that an innocent man is punished for sins which he did not commit, why do they not think that it indicated some extraordinary excellence to exist in him? But because they see him wounded and despised, they do not inquire about the cause, and from the event alone, as fools are wont to do, they pronounce judgment. Accordingly, Isaiah complains of the wicked judgment of men, in not considering the cause of Christ's heavy afflictions; and especially he deplores the dulness of his own nation, because they thought that God was a deadly enemy of Christ, and took no account of their own sins, which were to be expiated in this manner.

5. *And he was wounded for our iniquities.* He again re-

peats the cause of Christ's great afflictions, in order to meet the scandal which might have arisen from it. The spectacle of the cross alienates many persons from Christ, when they consider what is presented to their eyes, and do not observe the object to be accomplished. But all offence is removed when we know that by his death our sins have been expiated, and salvation has been obtained for us.

The chastisement of our peace. Some think that this is called "the chastisement of peace," on account of men being careless and stupified amidst their afflictions, and therefore that it was necessary that Christ should suffer. Others view "peace" as relating to the consciences, that is, that Christ suffered, in order that we might have peaceful consciences; as Paul says that, "being justified by faith through Christ, we have peace with God." (Rom. v. 1.) But I take it to denote simply reconciliation. Christ was the price of "our chastisement," that is, of the chastisement which was due to us. Thus the wrath of God, which had been justly kindled against us, was appeased; and through the Mediator we have obtained "peace," by which we are reconciled.

We ought to draw from this a universal doctrine, namely, that we are reconciled to God by free grace, because Christ hath paid the price of "our peace." This is indeed acknowledged by the Papists; but then they limit this doctrine to original sin, as if after baptism there were no longer any room for reconciliation through free grace, but that we must give satisfaction by our merits and works. But the Prophet does not here treat of a single species of pardon, but extends this blessing to the whole course of life; and therefore it cannot be thus undervalued or limited to a particular time, without most heinous sacrilege. Hence also the frivolous distinction of the Papists, between the remission of punishment and the pardon of sin, is easily refuted. They affirm that punishment is not remitted to us, unless it be washed out by satisfactions. But the Prophet openly declares that the punishment of our sins was transferred to him. What, then, do the Papists intend but to be Christ's equals and companions, and to lay claim to share with him in his authority?

In his wound (or, *in his medicine*) *we have healing.* He again directs us to Christ, that we may betake ourselves to his wounds, provided that we wish to regain life. Here the Prophet draws a contrast between us and Christ; for in us nothing can be found but destruction and death; in Christ alone is life and salvation. He alone brought medicine to us, and even procures health by his weakness, and life by his death; for he alone hath pacified the Father, he alone hath reconciled us to him. Here we might bring forward many things about the blessed consequences of Christ's sufferings, if we had not determined to expound rather than to preach; and therefore let us be satisfied with a plain exposition. Let every one, therefore, draw consolation from this passage, and let him apply the blessed result of this doctrine to his own use; for these words are spoken to all in general, and to individuals in particular.

6. *We all, like sheep, have gone astray.* In order to impress more deeply on our hearts the benefit of the death of Christ, he shews how necessary is that healing which he formerly mentioned. If we do not perceive our wretchedness and poverty, we shall never know how desirable is that remedy which Christ has brought to us, or approach him with due ardour of affection. As soon as we know that we are ruined, then, aware of our wretchedness, we eagerly run to avail ourselves of the remedy, which otherwise would be held by us in no estimation. In order, therefore, that Christ may be appreciated by us, let every one consider and examine himself, so as to acknowledge that he is ruined till he is redeemed by Christ.

We see that here none are excepted, for the Prophet includes "all." The whole human race would have perished, if Christ had not brought relief. He does not even except the Jews, whose hearts were puffed up with a false opinion of their own superiority, but condemns them indiscriminately, along with others, to destruction. By comparing them to *sheep*, he intends not to extenuate their guilt, as if little blame attached to them, but to state plainly that it belongs to Christ to gather from their wanderings those who resembled brute beasts.

Every one hath turned to his own way. By adding the term *every one*, he descends from a universal statement, in which he included all, to a special statement, that every individual may consider in his own mind if it be so; for a general statement produces less effect upon us than to know that it belongs to each of us in particular. Let "every one," therefore, arouse his conscience, and present himself before the judgment-seat of God, that he may confess his wretchedness. Moreover, what is the nature of this "going astray" the Prophet states more plainly. It is, that every one hath followed the way which he had chosen for himself, that is, hath determined to live according to his own fancy; by which he means that there is only one way of living uprightly, and if any one "turn aside" from it, he can experience nothing but "going astray."

He does not speak of works only, but of nature itself, which always leads us astray; for, if we could by natural instinct or by our own wisdom, bring ourselves back into the path, or guard ourselves against going astray, Christ would not be needed by us. Thus, in ourselves we all are undone unless Christ (John viii. 36) sets us free; and the more we rely on our wisdom or industry, the more dreadfully and the more speedily do we draw down destruction on ourselves. And so the Prophet shews what we are before we are regenerated by Christ; for all are involved in the same condemnation. "There is none righteous, none that understandeth, none that seeketh God. All have turned aside, and have become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good; no, not one." (Ps. xiv. 3.) All this is more fully explained by Paul. (Rom. iii. 10.)

And Jehovah hath laid upon him. Here we have a beautiful contrast. In ourselves we are scattered; in Christ we are gathered together. By nature we go astray, and are driven headlong to destruction; in Christ we find the course by which we are conducted to the harbour of salvation. Our sins are a heavy load; but they are laid on Christ, by whom we are freed from the load. Thus, when we were ruined, and, being estranged from God, were hastening to hell, Christ took upon him the filthiness of our iniquities, in order to

rescue us from everlasting destruction. This must refer exclusively to guilt and punishment; for he was free from sin. (Heb. iv. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 22.) Let every one, therefore, diligently consider his own iniquities, that he may have a true relish of that grace, and may obtain the benefit of the death of Christ.

7. *He was punished.* Here the Prophet applauds the obedience of Christ in suffering death; for if his death had not been voluntary, he would not have been regarded as having satisfied for our disobedience. "As by one man's disobedience," says Paul, "all became sinners, so by one man's obedience many were made righteous. (Rom. v. 19.) And elsewhere, "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philip. ii. 8.) This was the reason of his silence at the judgment-seat of Pilate, though he had a just defence to offer; for, having become answerable for our guilt, he wished to submit silently to the sentence, that we might loudly glory in the righteousness of faith obtained through free grace.

As a lamb shall he be led to the slaughter. We are here exhorted to patience and meekness, that, following the example of Christ, we may be ready to endure reproaches and cruel assaults, distress and torture. In this sense Peter quotes this passage, shewing that we ought to become like Christ our Head, that we may imitate his patience and submissiveness. (1 Pet. ii. 23.) In the word *lamb* there is probably an allusion to the sacrifices under the Law; and in this sense he is elsewhere called "the Lamb of God." (John i. 29, 36.)

8. *From prison and judgment.* There are various ways in which this passage is expounded. Some think that the Prophet continues the argument which he had already begun to treat, namely, that Christ was smitten by the hand of God, and afflicted, on account of our sins. The Greek translators render it, ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ ἤρθη. "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." Others, "He was taken away without delay." Others explain it, "He was taken away to the cross;" that is, as soon as Christ was seized, he was dragged to "judgment." I rather agree with those who think that the Prophet, after

having spoken of death, passes to the glory of the resurrection. He intended to meet the thoughts by which the minds of many persons might have been troubled and distressed; for when we see nothing but wounds and shame, we are struck with amazement, because human nature shrinks from such a spectacle.

The Prophet therefore declares that he was *taken away;* that is, that he was rescued "from prison and judgment" or condemnation, and afterwards was exalted to the highest rank of honour; that no one might think that he was overwhelmed or swallowed up by that terrible and shameful kind of death. For, undoubtedly, he was victorious even in the midst of death, and triumphed over his enemies; and he was so judged that now he has been appointed to be judge of all, as was publicly manifested by his resurrection. (Acts x. 42.) The same order is followed by the Prophet as by Paul, who, after having declared that Christ was abased even to the cross, adds that, on this account, he was exalted to the very highest honour, and that there was given him a name to which all things both in heaven and in earth must render obedience and bend the knee. (Philip. ii. 9.)

Who shall relate his generation? This exclamation has been stretched and (I may say) tortured into various meanings. The ancients abused this passage in reasoning against the Arians, when they wished to prove by it Christ's eternal generation. But they ought to have been satisfied with clearer testimonies of Scripture, that they might not expose themselves to the mockery of heretics, who sometimes take occasion from this to become more obstinate; for it might easily have been objected that the Prophet was not thinking about that subject. Chrysostom views it as relating to the human nature of Christ, that he was miraculously, and not by ordinary generation, conceived in the womb of the virgin; but that is a wide departure from the Prophet's meaning. Others think that Isaiah kindles into rage against the men of that age who crucified Christ. Others refer it to the posterity which should be born; namely, that Christ's posterity will be numerous though he die.

But, as דּוֹר (*dōr*) signifies "age" or "duration," I have

no doubt that he speaks of the "age" of Christ, and that his meaning is, that Christ, though almost overwhelmed by sicknesses, shall not only be taken from them, but that even his age shall be permanent and eternal; or, in other words, that he shall be unlike those who are indeed rescued from death, but shall afterwards die; for Christ rose from the dead, to live for ever, and, as Paul says, "cannot now die; death shall no longer have dominion over him." (Rom. vi. 9.) Yet let us remember that the Prophet does not speak of Christ's person alone, but includes the whole body of the Church, which ought never to be separated from him. We have therefore a striking proof of the perpetuity of the Church. As Christ liveth for ever, so he will not permit his kingdom to perish. The same immortality shall at length be bestowed on each of the members.

For he was cut off. This might indeed, at first sight, appear to be absurd, that the death of Christ is the cause and source of our life; but, because he bore the punishment of our sins, we ought therefore to apply to ourselves all the shame that appears in the cross. Yet in Christ the wonderful love of God shines forth, which renders his glory visible to us; so that we ought to be excited to rapturous admiration.

For the transgression of my people. He again repeats that the wound was inflicted on him "*for* the sins of the people;" and the object is, that we may diligently consider that it was for our sake, and not for his own, that he suffered; for he bore the punishment which we must have endured, if he had not offered this atonement. We ought to perceive in ourselves that guilt of which he bore the accusation and punishment, having offered himself in our name to the Father,[1] that by his condemnation we may be set free.

9. *And he laid open to wicked men his grave.* Jerome renders it, "And he gave wicked men for burial;" as if the Prophet spake of the punishment by which the Lord took vengeance for the sin of wicked men, who crucified Christ. But he rather speaks of the death of Christ, and of the fruit of it, and says nothing about that revenge. Others think

[1] "Au pere celeste." "To the heavenly Father."

that the particle אֵת (*ĕth*) denotes comparison, in the same manner as the particle כ (caph). "He gave his grave *as* of wicked men." Others interpret אֵת (*ĕth*) to mean *with*, and explain "the rich man" to be Joseph of Arimathea, in whose sepulchre Christ was buried. (Matt. xxvii. 60; John xix. 38.) But such an interpretation is too unnatural. I rather think that the real meaning is, that God the Father delivered Christ into the hands of wicked men.

And to the rich man his death. I consider the singular עָשִׁיר, (*gnāshīr*,) "the rich man," to be put for the plural עֲשִׁירִים (*gnăshīrīm*), as is frequently done by Hebrew writers. I see no reason why Œcolampadius rendered it "high places."[1] By "rich men" he means "violent men;" for men grow haughty and disdainful on account of their riches, and abuse their wealth to savage cruelty. And thus by the terms "wicked men" and "rich men" the same thing, in my opinion, is denoted. He means, therefore, that Christ was exposed to the reproaches, and insolence, and lawless passions of wicked men. For, on the one hand, the Pharisees and priests (Matt. xxvi. 66) rush upon him with unbridled rage and foul slander; on the other hand, Pilate, though well aware of his innocence, (Mark xv. 14,) condemns him in opposition to law and justice; and again, on another hand, the Roman soldiers, ready for every kind of barbarity, cruelly and wickedly execute the cruel and wicked sentence. (John xix. 16.) Who would not conclude that Christ was crushed and "buried" amidst those impious and bloody hands?

I consider the word *grave* to be here used metaphorically, because wicked and violent men might be said to have overwhelmed him. If it be objected that Christ had an honourable burial, I reply, that burial was the commencement of a glorious resurrection; but at present the Prophet speaks of death, which is often denoted by "the grave." I consider this, therefore, to be the real meaning, though I wish to leave every person free to form his own opinion.

[1] "Je ne voy point de raison pourquoy Œcolampade a traduit, Il a exposé ses hauts lieux au riche." "I see no reason why Œcolampadius translated it, 'He laid open his high places to the rich man.'"

Though he did no iniquity. עַל (*gnăl*) signifies "because;" but sometimes it is used in the sense of "though," as in this passage.[1] Here the Prophet applauds the innocence of Christ, not only in order to defend him from slander, but to speak highly of the benefit of his death, that we may not think that he suffered by chance. Though innocent, he suffered by the decree of God; and therefore it was for our sake, and not for his own, that he suffered. He bore the punishment which was due to us.

Neither was there deceit in his mouth. In two words he describes the perfect innocence of Christ; namely, that he never offended either in deed or in word. That this cannot be said of any mortal man is universally acknowledged, and hence it follows that it applies to Christ alone.

10. *Yet Jehovah was pleased to bruise him.* This illustrates more fully what I formerly stated in few words, that the Prophet, in asserting Christ's innocence, aims at something more than to defend him from all reproach. The object therefore is, that we should consider the cause, in order to have experience of the effect; for God appoints nothing at random, and hence it follows that the cause of his death is lawful. We must also keep in view the contrast. In Christ there was no fault; why, then, was the Lord pleased that he should suffer? Because he stood in our room, and in no other way than by his death could the justice of God be satisfied.

When he shall have offered his soul as a sacrifice. אָשָׁם (*āshām*)[2] denotes both sin and the sacrifice which is offered

[1] "עַל (*gnăl*), for אֲשֶׁר עַל (*gnăl ăshĕr*), is properly a causative particle, equivalent to 'for that' or 'because;' but most interpreters regard it as equivalent to 'although,' which is more agreeable to our idiom in this connection. Knobel observes, with great naïveté, that the reference of this verse to the burial of Christ has found its way into the exposition of the passage in connection with its general application to that subject; to which we may add, that it can only find its way out in connection with a wish to get rid of that unwelcome application. At the same time it must be observed, that even if עָשִׁיר (*gnāshīr*) be taken in the sense of 'wicked,' although we lose the striking allusion to the burial of Christ in the sepulchre of Joseph, the verse is still applicable to his burial, as the last clause then means, like the first, that they appointed him his grave with malefactors."—*Alexander.*

[2] "אָשָׁם (*āshām*) primarily signifies a trespass or offence, and secondarily

for sin, and is often used in the latter sense in the Scriptures. (Exod. xxix. 14; Ezek. xlv. 22.)[1] The sacrifice was offered in such a manner as to expiate sin by enduring its punishment and curse. This was expressed by the priests by means of the laying on of hands, as if they threw on the sacrifice the sins of the whole nation. (Exod. xxix. 15.) And if a private individual offered a sacrifice, he also laid his hand upon it, as if he threw upon it his own sin. Our sins were thrown upon Christ in such a manner that he alone bore the curse.

On this account Paul also calls him a "curse" or "execration:" "Christ hath redeemed us from the execration of the law, having been made an execration for us." (Gal. iii. 13.) He likewise calls him "Sin;" "For him who knew no sin hath he made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) And in another passage, "For what was impossible for the law, inasmuch as it was weak on account of the flesh, God did, by sending his own Son in the likeness of flesh liable to sin, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." (Rom. viii. 3, 4.) What Paul meant by the words "curse" and "sin" in these passages is the same as what the Prophet meant by the word אָשָׁם, (*āshām.*) In short, אָשָׁם (*āshām*) is equivalent to the Latin word *piaculum*,[2] an expiatory sacrifice.

a trespass-offering. In the law of Moses it is technically used to designate a certain kind of sacrifice, nearly allied to the חַטָּאת (*hăttāth*) or sin-offering, and yet very carefully distinguished from it, although archaeologists have never yet been able to determine the precise distinction, and a learned modern Rabbi, Samuel Luzzatto, expresses his conviction that they differed only in the mode of offering the blood. The word is here used not with specific reference to this kind of oblation, but as a generic term for expiatory sacrifice. The use of analogous expressions in the New Testament will be clear, from a comparison of Rom. iii. 25; viii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10; Heb. ix. 14. In the case last quoted, as in that before us, Christ is represented as offering himself to God."—*Alexander.*

[1] In both of the passages quoted by our author, the word is not אָשָׁם (*āshām*) but חַטָּאת (*hăttāth*), which, as appears from the preceding note, is closely analogous.—*Ed.*

[2] This Latin word, which bore the primary meaning of "an atonement for a transgression," and the secondary meaning of "any wickedness that requires expiation," is strikingly analogous to the Hebrew word in question, though the transference of the senses is exactly opposite. "Distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem, *Virg.* id est, Piacula commissa propter

Here we have a description of the benefit of Christ's death, that by his sacrifice sins were expiated, and God was reconciled towards men; for such is the import of this word אָשָׁם, (*āshām.*) Hence it follows that nowhere but in Christ is found expiation and satisfaction for sin. In order to understand this better, we must first know that we are guilty before God, so that we may be accursed and detestable in his presence. Now, if we wish to return to a state of favour with him, sin must be taken away. This cannot be accomplished by sacrifices contrived according to the fancy of men. Consequently, we must come to the death of Christ; for in no other way can satisfaction be given to God. In short, Isaiah teaches that sins cannot be pardoned in any other way than by betaking ourselves to the death of Christ. If any person think that this language is harsh and disrespectful to Christ, let him descend into himself, and, after a close examination, let him ponder how dreadful is the judgment of God, which could not be pacified but by this price; and thus the inestimable grace which shines forth in making Christ accursed will easily remove every ground of offence.

He shall see his seed. Isaiah means that the death of Christ not only can be no hinderance to his having a seed, but will be the cause of his having offspring; that is, because, by quickening the dead, he will procure a people for himself, whom he will afterwards multiply more and more; and there is no absurdity in giving the appellation of Christ's seed to all believers, who are also brethren, because they are descended from Christ.

He shall prolong his days. To this clause some supply the relative אֲשֶׁר, (*ăshĕr,*) "which:" "A seed which shall be longlived." But I expound it in a more simple manner, "Christ shall not be hindered by his death from prolonging his days, that is, from living eternally." Some persons, when departing from life, leave children, but children who shall survive them, and who shall live so as to obtain a name

quæ expiatio debetur."—*Serv.* "Piaculum committere" means literally to "commit a sacrifice," that is, "to commit a crime for which a sacrifice is required."—*Ed.*

only when their fathers are dead. But Christ shall enjoy the society of his children; for he shall not die like other men, but shall obtain eternal life in himself and his children. Thus Isaiah declares that in the head and the members there shall be immortal life.

And the will of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. The word "hand" often denotes "ministry," as the Lord proclaimed the law "by the hand of Moses." (Num. xxxvi. 13.) Again, the Lord did this "by the hands of David;" that is, he made use of David as his minister in that matter. (Ezra iii. 10.) So also "in the hand of Christ shall prosper the will of God;" that is, the Lord will cause the ministry of Christ to yield its fruit, that it may not be thought that he exposed himself fruitlessly to such terrible sufferings.

These few words contain a very rich doctrine, which every reader may draw from them; but we are satisfied with giving a simple exposition of the text. "Will" is taken in the same acceptation as before; for he makes use of the word חֵפֶץ, (*chāphētz,*) by which he means a kind and generous disposition. Two views of God's kindness are held up for our admiration in this passage; first, that he spared not his only-begotten Son, but delivered him for us, that he might deliver us from death; and secondly, that he does not suffer his death to be useless and unprofitable, but causes it to yield very abundant fruit; for the death of Christ would be of no avail to us, if we did not experience its fruit and efficacy.

11. *From the labour of his soul he shall see.* Isaiah continues the same subject. He declares that Christ, after having suffered, shall obtain the fruit of his death in the salvation of men. When he says, "He shall see," we must supply the words, "Fruit and Efficacy." This is full of the sweetest consolation; for Isaiah could not have better expressed the infinite love of Christ toward us than by declaring that he takes the highest delight in our salvation, and that he rests in it as the fruit of his labours, as he who has obtained his wish rests in that which he most ardently desired; for no person can be said to be *satisfied* but he who

has obtained what he wished so earnestly as to disregard everything else and be satisfied with this alone.

By his doctrine, or *by the knowledge of him.* He now points out the way and method by which we experience the power and efficacy of the death of Christ, and obtain the benefit of it. That method is "the knowledge of him." I acknowledge that the word דַּעַת (*dăgnăth*) may be taken either in an active or a passive sense, as denoting either "the knowledge of him" or "his knowledge." In whichsoever of these senses it is taken, we shall easily understand the Prophet's meaning; and the Jews will not be able to practise such impudent sophistry as to prevent us from extorting from them a reluctant acknowledgment of what is here asserted, that Christ is the only teacher and author of righteousness.

Shall justify many. By the word "*justify*" he points out the effect of this teaching. Thus, men are not only taught righteousness in the school of Christ, but are actually justified. And this is the difference between the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of the Law; for, although the Law shews what it is to be righteous, yet Paul affirms that it is impossible that righteousness should be obtained by it, and experience proves the same thing; for the Law is a mirror in which we behold our own unrighteousness. (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16, 21, and iii. 10, 11.) Now, the doctrine which Christ teaches, as to obtaining righteousness, is nothing else than "the knowledge of him;" and this is faith, when we embrace the benefit of his death and fully rely on him.

Philosophers have laid down many excellent precepts, which, as they imagine, contain righteousness; but they never could bestow it on any man;[1] for who ever obtained by their rules the power of living uprightly? And it is of no advantage to know what is true righteousness, if we are destitute of it. To say nothing about philosophers, the Law itself, which contains the most perfect rule of life, could not (as we have said) bestow this; not that there was any defect

[1] "Mais ils n'ont jamais peu faire un seul homme juste." "But they never could make one man righteous."

in it, for Moses testified (Deut. xxx. 19) that "he had set before them good and evil, life and death;" but that the corruption of our nature is such that the Law could not suffice for procuring righteousness. In like manner Paul teaches (Rom. viii. 3) that this weakness proceeds "from our flesh," and not from the Law; for nature prompts us in another direction, and our lusts burst forth with greater violence, like wild and furious beasts, against the command of God. The consequence is, that "the law worketh wrath," instead of righteousness. (Rom. iv. 15.) The law therefore holds all men as convicted, and, after having made known their sin, renders men utterly inexcusable.

We must therefore seek another way of righteousness, namely, in Christ, whom the law also pointed out as its end. (Rom. x. 3.) "The righteousness of the law was of this nature: He who doeth these things shall live by them." (Lev. xviii. 5; Gal. iii. 12.) But nobody has done them, and therefore another righteousness is necessary, which Paul also proves (Rom. x. 8) by a quotation from Moses himself, "The word is nigh, in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach." (Deut. xxx. 14.) By this doctrine, therefore, we are justified; not by the bare and simple doctrine, but inasmuch as it exhibits the benefit of the death of Christ, by which atonement is made for our sins, and we are reconciled to God. (Rom. v. 10.) For, if we embrace this benefit by faith, we are reckoned righteous before God.

For he shall bear their iniquities. The Prophet explains his meaning by pointing out what this doctrine contains; for these two clauses agree well: "he shall justify by his doctrine," or "by the knowledge of him," inasmuch as "he shall bear their iniquities." Having been once made a sacrifice for us, he now invites us by the doctrine of the Gospel, to receive the fruit of his death; and thus the death of Christ is the substance of the doctrine, in order that he may justify us. To this saying of the Prophet Paul fully subscribes; for, after having taught that "Christ was an expiatory sacrifice for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," he at the same time adds, "We are

ambassadors for Christ, and beseech you, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. v. 20, 21.)

My righteous servant. He shews that Christ justifies us, not only as he is God, but also as he is man; for in our flesh he procured righteousness for us. He does not say, "The Son," but "My servant," that we may not only view him as God, but may contemplate his human nature, in which he performed that obedience by which we are acquitted before God. The foundation of our salvation is this, that he offered himself as a sacrifice; and, in like manner, he himself declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be holy." (John xvii. 19.)

12. *Therefore will I divide to him a portion.* Isaiah again declares what will be the result of the death of Christ. It was necessary that he should add this doctrine as to the victory which Christ obtained by his death; for what was formerly stated, that by his death we are reconciled to the Father, would not have sufficiently confirmed our hearts. Here he borrows a comparison from the ordinary form of a triumphal procession held by those who, after having obtained a signal victory, are commonly received and adorned with great pomp and splendour. Thus also Christ, as a valiant and illustrious general, triumphed over the enemies whom he had vanquished.

And he shall divide the spoil with the strong. This statement is the same as the preceding, and it is a customary repetition among Hebrew writers. Those whom he formerly called "great" he now calls mighty or "strong." Those who translate רַבִּים (*răbbīm*) by the word "many,"[1] torture, in my opinion, the Prophet's meaning. In these two clauses there is only this difference, that in the former God testifies what he gave to Christ, and in the latter he adds that Christ enjoys that benefit. He enjoys it not on his own account, but on ours;[2] for the fruit of this victory comes to us. For us Christ subdued death, the world, and the devil. In a word, the Prophet here applauds the victory which

[1] "Ceux qui traduisent, Je luy distribueray portion avec plusieurs." "Those who translate, I will divide to him a portion with many."

[2] "Non point pour soy, mais pour nous." "Not for himself, but for us."

followed the death of Christ; for "although he was crucified through the weakness of the flesh, yet by the power of the Spirit" he rose from the dead, and triumphed over his enemies. (2 Cor. xiii. 4.) Such is the import of the metaphor of "Spoil," which the Prophet used; for "he ascended on high, that he might lead captivity captive and give gifts to men." (Psalm lxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8.)

For he poured out his soul to death. He now adds that Christ's humiliation was the beginning of this supreme dominion; as Paul also declares that Christ, "after having blotted out the handwriting which was opposed to us, triumphed on the cross." (Col. ii. 14.) So far, then, is the shame of the death which Christ died from making any diminution of his glory, that it is the reason why God the Father exalted him to the highest honour.

And was ranked with transgressors. He describes also the kind of death; as Paul, when he magnifies "the obedience" of Christ, and says that "he abased himself even to death," likewise adds, that it was no ordinary death, but the death "of the cross," that is, accursed and shameful. (Philip. ii. 8.) So in this passage Isaiah, in order to express deeper shame, says that he was ranked among malefactors. But the deeper the shame before men, the greater was the glory of his resurrection by which it was followed.

Mark quotes this passage, when he relates that Christ was crucified between two robbers; for at that time the prediction was most fully accomplished. (Mark xv. 28.) But the Prophet spoke in general terms, in order to shew that Christ did not die an ordinary death. For the purpose of disgracing him the more, those two robbers were added; that Christ, as the most wicked of all, might be placed in the midst of them. This passage is, therefore, most appropriately quoted by Mark as relating to that circumstance.

He bore the sin of many. This is added by way of correction, that, when we hear of the shame of Christ's death, we may not think that it was a blot on the character of Christ, and that our minds may not, by being prejudiced in that manner, be prevented from receiving the victory which he obtained for us, that is, the fruit of his death. He shews,

therefore, that this was done in order that he might take our sins upon him; and his object is, that, whenever the death of Christ shall be mentioned, we may at the same time remember the atonement made for us. And this fruit swallows up all the shame of the death of Christ, that his majesty and glory may be more clearly seen than if we only beheld him sitting in heaven; for we have in him a striking and memorable proof of the love of God, when he is so insulted, degraded, and loaded with the utmost disgrace, in order that we, on whom had been pronounced a sentence of everlasting destruction, may enjoy along with him immortal glory.

I have followed the ordinary interpretation, that "he bore the sin of many," though we might without impropriety consider the Hebrew word רַבִּים (*răbbīm*) to denote "Great and Noble." And thus the contrast would be more complete, that Christ, while "he was ranked among transgressors," became surety for every one of the most excellent of the earth, and suffered in the room of those who hold the highest rank in the world. I leave this to the judgment of my readers. Yet I approve of the ordinary reading, that he alone bore the punishment of many, because on him was laid the guilt of the whole world. It is evident from other passages, and especially from the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, that "many" sometimes denotes "all."

And prayed for the transgressors. Because the ratification of the atonement, with which Christ has washed us by his death, implies that he pleaded with the Father on our behalf, it was proper that this should be added. For, as in the ancient Law the priest, who "never entered without blood," at the same time interceded for the people; so what was there shadowed out is fulfilled in Christ. (Ex. xxx. 10; Heb. ix. 7.) First, he offered the sacrifice of his body, and shed his blood, that he might endure the punishment which was due to us; and secondly, in order that the atonement might take effect, he performed the office of an advocate, and interceded for all who embraced this sacrifice by faith; as is evident from that prayer which he left to us, written by the hand of John, "I pray not for these only, but for all who shall believe on me through their word." (John xvii.

20.) If we then belong to their number, let us be fully persuaded that Christ hath suffered for us, that we may now enjoy the benefit of his death.

He expressly mentions "transgressors," that we may know that we ought to betake ourselves with assured confidence to the cross of Christ, when we are horror-struck by the dread of sin. Yea, for this reason he is held out as our intercessor and advocate; for without his intercession our sins would deter us from approaching to God.

CHAPTER LIV.

1. Sing, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

1. Exulta, sterilis, quæ non pariebas; exulta et jubila, quæ non parturiebas; quoniam plures filii viduæ quam filii conjugatæ, dicit Iehova.

2. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes:

2. Dilata locum tabernaculorum tuorum, et cortinas tentoriorum tuorum extendant: ne parcas. Produc funes tuos, et clavos tuos consolida.

3. For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

3. Quia ad dextram et sinistram multiplicaberis: et semen tuum Gentes possidebit; et urbes desolatas inhabitabunt.

4. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

4. Ne timeas, quia non pudifies; et ne erubescas, quia non afficieris ignominia; imo pudoris adolescentiæ tuæ oblivisceris; et opprobrii viduitatis tuæ non recordaberis amplius.

5. For thy Maker *is* thine husband; The Lord of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

5. Quia maritus tuus, fictor tuus, cui nomen Iehova exercituum; et redemptor tuus Sanctus Israel, Deus universæ terræ vocabitur.

6. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken, and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

6. Quoniam sicut mulierem relictam et destitutam spiritu vocavit te Iehova; et uxorem adolescentiæ, quæ repudiata fueras, dicit Deus tuus.

7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

7. Ad exiguum momentum reliqui te, et in misericordiis magnis colligam te.

8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with

8. In momento iræ abscondi faciem meam paulisper a te; at cle-

everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

9. For this *is as* the waters of Noah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

10. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

11. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, *and* not comforted! behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

12. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13. And all thy children *shall be* taught of the Lord; and great *shall be* the peace of thy children.

14. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

15. Behold, they shall surely gather together, *but* not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

16. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the Lord.

mentia sempiterna misertus sum tui, dicit redemptor tuus Iehova.

9. Quoniam aquæ (*vel, sicut dies*) Noe, hoc mihi; quandoquidem juravi non fore ut amplius transirent aquæ Noe super terram; ita juravi non fore ut tibi irascar vel increpem te.

10. Nam montes quidem movebuntur, et colles nutabunt; misericordia autem mea non recedet a te, nec fœdus pacis meæ vacillabit, dicit miserator tuus Iehova.

11. Paupercula tempestate jactata, consolatione destituta; ecce ego struam super carbunculum lapides tuos, et fundabo te in sapphiris.

12. Et ponam e margaritis fenestras tuas, et portas tuas ex lapide rutilante, et omnes fines tuos ex lapide pretioso.

13. Nam omnes filii tui docti ab Iehova, et multa pax filiis tuis.

14. In justitia præparaberis, longe aberis ab oppressione, quia non timebis eam; et a pavore, quia non appropinquabit tibi.

15. Et conveniens conveniet contra te absque me; qui convenerit in te, contra te cadet.

16. Ecce ego creavi fabrum, sufflantem in igne prunas, et proferentem instrumentum ad opus suum. Ego, inquam, creavi vastatorem ad perdendum.

17. Omne instrumentum quod formatum est contra te non habebit successum; et omnem linguam quæ in te surrexerit in judicium tu damnabis. Hæc hæreditas servorum Iehovæ, et justitia eorum a me, dicit Iehova.

1. *Shout.* After having spoken of the death of Christ, he passes on with good reason to the Church; that we may feel more deeply in ourselves what is the value and efficacy of his death. We cannot behold it in Christ, if he be viewed

by himself; and therefore we must come to his body, which is the Church; because Christ suffered for the Church, and not for himself. And this is the order in our Confession of Faith;[1] for, after having professed that we believe in Christ, who suffered and was crucified for us, we add that we believe in the Church,[2] which flowed, as it were, from his side. Accordingly, after having discoursed concerning the death and resurrection and triumph of Christ, he properly comes down to the Church, which ought never to be separated from her Head, that each individual believer may learn by his own experience that Christ has not suffered in vain. And if he had not mentioned this doctrine, believers could not have so well strengthened their hearts by the hope of restoring the Church. This congratulation plainly shews that, when Christ shall come forth as a conqueror over death, he will not merely conquer for himself as an individual, but will, at the same time, breathe life into his body.

Thou barren, that didst not bear. He calls the Church "barren," because no offspring could be expected from her, so long as she groaned under wretched bondage; for if any one had judged of her from her outward condition, he would have concluded that she was very near destruction. And even apart from her external wretchedness, there was nothing pure within; everything was corrupted and defiled by superstitions; for they had degenerated into the idolatrous rites of the Gentiles.

The children of the widow. He calls the Church not merely "Barren," but a "Widow," though either of them might have taken away the hope of having offspring; but when these two are combined, what else can be looked for than wretched destruction? But against such accumulated distress he bids her be of good courage, because she shall have more children than *the married woman.*

This passage may be explained in two ways; either as a comparison of the Church with the Gentiles, who flourished like "a married woman," or as a comparison with that con-

[1] "En nos articles de foy." "In our articles of faith."

[2] Our author evidently speaks of what is usually called "The Apostle's Creed."—*Ed.*

dition in which the Church was before the captivity. Both senses will be perfectly admissible, but I prefer to adopt the more simple view; for I do not think that it is a comparison between two conditions of the Church, but that it is an ordinary form of expression which the Prophet employs in order to denote that this extraordinary fertility of the Church will be at variance with what usually takes place, so that men may not judge of her condition by the ordinary course of nature; because the work of God will be extraordinary and wonderful. And yet I acknowledge that she was at that time in widowhood; for God had long before sent to her by his servants a bill of divorcement, and had actually divorced that nation, by driving it into banishment. But the Prophet declares that this punishment will be temporary, as we shall immediately see more clearly.

2. *Widen the place of thy tabernacles.* He continues his argument under other metaphors, and promises that the Lord will not only restore his Church, but will bestow upon her a condition far more excellent. They who think that the Church is compared in this passage to a synagogue are, in my opinion, mistaken, and only succeed in increasing the obstinacy of the Jews, who perceive that the Prophet's meaning is tortured. I do indeed acknowledge that these things relate to the kingdom of Christ, and that they were at length fulfilled as soon as the Gospel began to be preached; but it does not therefore follow that the Prophet did not, at the same time, keep his eye upon that period which preceded the coming of Christ.

This prophecy began to be fulfilled under Cyrus, who gave the people liberty to return, and afterwards extended to Christ, in whom it has its full accomplishment. The Church therefore conceived, when the people returned to their native country; for the body of the people was gathered together from which Christ should proceed, in order that the pure worship of God and true religion might again be revived. Hitherto, indeed, this fertility was not visible; for the conception was concealed, as it were, in the mother's womb, and no outward appearance of it could be seen; but afterwards the people were increased, and after the birth the Church

grew from infancy to manhood, till the Gospel was preached. This was the actual youth of the Church; and next follows the age of manhood, down to Christ's last coming, when all things shall be fully accomplished.

All these things must be taken together, if we wish to learn the Prophet's real meaning. In this way Zechariah, (ii. 5,) Malachi, (iv. 2,) and Haggai encouraged the people by the hope of their future condition, when they saw that little progress was made in building the temple; for they promised that "the glory of the latter temple should be greater than the glory of the former." (Hag. ii. 9.) This was not at all visible, and therefore they extended those promises till Christ; and by hope and confidence in him the people must have been encouraged to build the temple. Consequently, this consolation was common to the Jews who lived under the Law, and to us who see more clearly in Christ this restoration of the Church.

The curtains of thy tents. The metaphor is borrowed from tabernacles, which were extensively used in that country. The Church is compared to them, because it has no solid building in the world; for it appears to be wandering and unsettled, in consequence of being necessarily moved from one place to another on account of various changes. But still I am fully persuaded that the Prophet had in his eye that former deliverance (as we have stated to have been customary with the prophets) when, being led through the wilderness, they dwelt in tents for forty years; for which reason they kept a public festival every year by the command of God. (Lev. xxiii. 39-43.)

It will be objected that the building which is erected by the ministers of the Word is so solid that it ought not to be compared to "tabernacles." But I reply, this metaphor of "tabernacles" relates rather to the outward aspect of the Church than to its spiritual and (what may be called) its internal condition; for the actual building of the Church is nothing else than the kingdom of God, which is not fading or similar to tents. Yet the Church does not cease to be conveyed from one place to another; for it has no stable or permanent habitation. In short, its solid firmness is such

that it surpasses the best fortified citadels; for, relying on the invincible power of God, it scorns all danger. On the other hand, it resembles "tents," because earthly wealth, forces, and strength are not its support.

3. *Because thou shalt be multiplied.* Now follows the reason why he commanded the cords to be lengthened for enlarging the tents. It is, that a moderate space would not contain a numerous people, whom the Lord will gather into one from every quarter. Now, because Judea was hideous on account of its ruins and desolation, he says that the forsaken cities shall be inhabited.

4. *Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed.* Here, as formerly, he strengthens the hearts of believers, and addresses the whole Church; for the calamity was universal, and the Church appeared to be totally ruined. He bids her be of good cheer, and next assigns the reason; that the issue of her troubles will be such that she "shall not be ashamed;" as if he had said, "Although for a time thou art wretched, yet thy affairs shall be prosperous;" and as it is elsewhere said, "They who hope in the Lord shall not be ashamed." (Ps. xxv. 3.)

Blush not; that is, "cherish good hope, and be confident." Those men "blush" who are ashamed, and who, being disappointed of their hope, suffer their hearts to be cast down. He next assigns the same reason, "for thou shalt not be exposed to shame." I consider that here, as formerly, כִּי (*kī*) signifies *for;* and therefore the same sentence is twice repeated under a variety of expressions, except that the former clause may relate to the disposition of the heart, and the latter to the external cause. But the more simple meaning of both clauses is, that it is a promise of success and prosperity, as if he had said that the calamity shall be brought to an end.

Yea, thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth. This is a confirmation of the former clause. He means the calamities which befell the Church while she was still young, and the remembrance of which will be wholly obliterated by the prosperity which she shall afterwards enjoy. We mentioned a little before, that *widowhood* is a term used in

regard to her, because God had forsaken, and, so to speak, had divorced her.

5. *For thy Maker is thy husband.* He assigns the reason why she will forget all the distresses and calamities which she formerly endured. It is because God will again receive her into favour; for captivity might be said to be a kind of divorce, as we formerly saw.[1] (Is. l. 1.) He now says, "He who created thee shall be thy husband;" for such is the import of the words. He calls himself the "Maker" of his Church, not only because he created the Church as he created other men, but because he condescended to adopt her as his heritage; and this privilege may be regarded as a new life. Although the Jews fell from their dignity, as men are speedily led to revolt,[2] if they are not renewed by the Spirit of strength, yet their spiritual creation was not wholly extinguished, for the remembrance of the covenant remained, and hence also God created them anew.

Whose name is Jehovah of hosts. This refers to his power, that we may be permitted to glory in it, seeing that we are his children; for the greater the power of God, and the more honourable his name, so much the greater is our boasting, so long as we are his children and do not boast of an empty title. Now, the Prophet magnifies this kindness of God, that he condescends to have us instead of a wife, that we may be able to glory in his power and strength.

Thy Redeemer. He calls himself the "Redeemer," in order that he may more fully confirm the people in that hope; that, although the former deliverance appeared to be cancelled, because the people were again led into captivity, yet they shall be restored in such a manner as to know that the grace of God is not without effect.

Shall be called. The verb, יִקָּרֵא, (*yĭkkārē,*) "shall be called," may refer either to the name "Redeemer," or to the name "Holy One," or to both. I willingly connect both together in this manner, "The Holy One of Israel shall be called thy Redeemer, and the God of the whole earth."[3] He employs

[1] See p. 47.

[2] "Comme les hommes sont incontinent destournez du droit chemin." "As men are quickly turned aside from the right path."

[3] "Le Sainct d'Israel, qui est ton Redempteur, sera appelé le Dieu de

the expression, *the whole earth*, because the name of God had formerly been, in some respects, confined to Judea, but, by the preaching of the Gospel, the Gentiles have been called to the same hope of salvation. (Ps. lxxvi. 2.) The Lord is "the God of the Gentiles" (Rom. iii. 29) as well as "of the Jews;" for the Gentiles, though formerly "far off," (Eph. ii. 13,) have been united to the Jews under his government.

6. *For as a woman forsaken.* He meets a doubt which might arise in the minds of believers amidst so distressing a calamity. It seemed as if the Lord had rejected them, so that they had nothing to look for but destruction. The Prophet therefore reminds them that they ought not to despair, because they have been thus forsaken; for God, according to his mercy, is ready to be reconciled, and is even willing to raise them from the dead.[1]

And a wife of youth. He employs this expression in order that, by this metaphor, he may more fully confirm their hearts in that hope; for the hearts of young husbands are more easily reconciled than the hearts of older husbands, being attracted, and, as it were, driven forward by youthful age and tender love. In like manner, he shews that God will be easily reconciled. "True, thou wast divorced; but the divorce shall not be of long duration. The Lord will shew himself ready to be reconciled, and will even, of his own accord, be the first to invite thee to reconciliation."[2]

7. *For a little moment I forsook thee.* The Prophet explains more fully the former statement, and shews what will be the nature of this divorce, namely, that she shall be speedily restored to her former condition. He magnifies the mercy of God, and extenuates the sorrow by which the hearts of believers might be oppressed. It was not enough for believers

toute la terre, ou, Le Sainct d'Israel sera appelé ton Redempteur et Dieu de toute la terre." "The Holy One of Israel, who is thy Redeemer, shall be called the God of the whole earth, or, The Holy one of Israel shall be called thy Redeemer, and God of the whole earth."

[1] "Et mesmes veut redresser celuy qui est au sepulchre." "And even wishes to revive him who is in the grave."

[2] "He compares the Hebrew nation to 'a wife of youth;' that is, to a wife whom he married in youth, (Prov. v. 18; Mal. ii. 14,) towards whom he retained his former love. Compare Is. lxii. 4."—*Rosenmüller*. "A wife of youth, not merely a young wife, but one married early."—*Alexander*.

to expect some revival, if they were not convinced that God's wrath would be of short duration. We quickly lose courage and faint, if the Lord be not nigh, and if he do not quickly stretch out his hand to us. For this reason Isaiah, after having spoken of restoring the Church, adds that this divorce shall last but "for a moment," but that *his mercy shall be everlasting.*

When he says that he *forsook* his people, it is a sort of admission of the fact.[1] We are adopted by God in such a manner that we cannot be rejected by him on account of the treachery of men; for he is faithful, so that he will not cast off or abandon his people. What the Prophet says in this passage must therefore refer to our feelings and to outward appearance, because we seem to be rejected by God when we do not perceive his presence and protection. And it is necessary that we should thus feel God's wrath, even as a wife divorced by her husband deplores her condition, that we may know that we are justly chastised. But we must also perceive his mercy; and because it is infinite and eternal, we shall find that all afflictions in comparison of it are light and momentary. Whenever, therefore, we are pressed by adversity, we ought to betake ourselves to this consolation. At the same time it ought to be observed, that what was said was actually true as to the whole body of the people, who had been divorced on account of their wickedness; and although God did not receive all of them indiscriminately into favour with him, but only the elect remnant, yet there is nothing absurd or improper in addressing his discourse as if it had been to the same persons.[2]

8. *In a moment of wrath.* He again repeats and enforces this statement, in order to impress it more deeply on the hearts of believers, that they may not be at all discouraged by adversity, and with good reason; for, amidst that frightful darkness, it was not easy for the captives to behold God's smiling face. And although the literal sense in which the

[1] "C'est comme s'il accordoit qu'il fust ainsi." "It is as if he admitted that this was actually the case."

[2] "En ce qu'il addresse sa parole à tous." "In addressing his discourse to all."

"wrath" is here said to last but for "a moment"[1] be, that God in due time brought back the captives to their native country, yet we draw from it a general doctrine, that the afflictions of the Church are always momentary, when we raise our eyes to its eternal happiness. We ought to remember what Paul has taught us, (2 Cor. iv. 17,) that all the afflictions of believers are light and easy to be endured, and are justly considered to be momentary, while they look at the "eternal weight of glory;" for if we do not attend to this comparison, every day will seem to us like a year. There would be no propriety in comparing the seventy years of the captivity of the Jews to "a moment," if it were not contrasted with the uninterrupted progress of the grace of God.

9. *For the waters of Noah*, or, *As the days of Noah.* There are two readings of this passage; for if we read it מי כי, (*kī mē,*) כי (*ki*) must be translated *For;* and if we read it כימי, (*kīmē,*) כ (*caph*) must be translated *As*, and ימי (*yĕmē*) must be translated *Days.*[2] As to the general meaning, it makes little difference; and therefore we ought chiefly to consider what the Prophet meant, for commentators do not appear to me to have caught his meaning. They explain it generally, that the Lord promised to Noah by an

[1] "In explaining the words בשצף קצף, (*bĕshĕtzĕph kĕtzĕph,*) commentators differ, being uncertain as to the meaning of the word שצף, (*shĕtzĕph.*) Most commentators, on no other grounds, as Kimchi himself acknowledges, than the context of this passage, think that it denotes 'something little,' which some, concurring with the Chaldee interpreter, refer to 'a little time;' but as this is afterwards expressed by the word רגע, (*rĕgăng,*) others refer it to 'a small measure," agreeing with the Septuagint, which translate it ἐν θυμῷ μικρῷ, 'for a short time,' compared with Zech. i. 15. But A. Schultens, in his Animadversiones Philologicæ on this passage, has justly remarked that there are good grounds for hesitation as to this received interpretation, because in none of the cognate languages can any trace of this meaning of the word שצף (*shĕtzĕph*) be found, nor even from the context is it very evident. By comparison with an Arabic root, he makes it signify 'In vehemence of wrath I hid,' &c. 'In great wrath' is the sense justly expressed by the Syriac version."—*Rosenmüller.*

[2] מי, (*mē,*) "waters of," is the construct form of מים, (*măim,*) "waters;" and ימי, (*yĕmē,*) "days of," is the construct form of ימים, (*yāmĭm,*) "days." —*Ed.* "On peut lire ceci en deux sortes, assavoir comme nous l'avons traduit, Car ceci m'est comme les eaux de Noe, ou, Ceci m'est comme les jours de Noe." "This may be read in two ways, namely, as we have translated it, This is to me as the waters of Noah, or, This is to me as the days of Noah."

oath, that there would never be a deluge, and that this oath would perpetually remain in force. (Gen. ix. 10.) But for this, the good man might have trembled, and, at the approach of rain, might have dreaded a similar calamity, if the Lord had not sworn that this should never again happen. In like manner, when afflictions are at hand, we might dread that we should be ruined, if the Lord did not promise that the Church would be safe.

But I think that this ought to be limited to the period of the Babylonish captivity. He compares that captivity to a deluge, which destroyed the face of the earth; for it appeared as if the Church was utterly ruined. The people had almost entirely passed over to another nation, and had no kingdom and no civil government of their own; they underwent very hard bondage, and thought that their name was wholly extinguished. And at that time was actually fulfilled what the Prophet formerly declared, "If the Lord had not left to us a seed, we should have been like Sodom and Gomorrah." (Isa. i. 9.) Justly, therefore, does he compare that calamity to "the waters of Noah," that is, to the deluge; and on this account I rather agree with those who read כִּי מֵי, (*kī mē*,) that is, "For the waters;" for I consider that reading to rest on better evidence than the other, and it is generally adopted by Jewish writers.

This is to me. I think that we ought carefully to inquire into the meaning of these words, which are slightly passed over by commentators. He means that this calamity will resemble the deluge; so that, as he was satisfied with a single deluge, and would never again send another, so he is satisfied with this one destruction, so to speak, of the Church, and will never again permit the face of it to be destroyed. Such is therefore the manner in which I think that we ought to explain this passage and apply the metaphor, that the desolation of Judea will be to God like the deluge which happened in "the days of Noah;" for as he swore at that time that he would never afterwards inflict such punishment on the crimes which stripped the earth of its inhabitants, so he will not again destroy the Church, as he did in the Babylonish captivity. And indeed, whatever might be any con-

fused state of affairs that afterwards followed, still the Church retained some name, and preserved some form, until, at the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, the seed of the Gospel was everywhere scattered, that it might bring sons to God out of all nations. In a word, the Lord promises that henceforth he will restrain his wrath, and will not punish his people with so great severity.

It will be objected, that since that time the Church sustained very grievous calamities; from which it might be concluded, either that this oath failed of its accomplishment, or that this is not the Prophet's meaning. I reply, the Church did not sustain so grievous a calamity as to have its face altogether destroyed, which happened when the people were carried away into Babylon. For although Antiochus and other tyrants brought upon it dreadful calamities, although afterwards there also happened those apostasies which Paul foretold, (2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 1,) and everything was defiled by innumerable superstitions, so that the Christian name was nearly buried; yet still there remained some form of a Church, however disfigured, and the building was not in so ruinous a condition that there did not exist some remnants of Christianity above the deluge, so that this oath was in full force.

That I will not be wroth with thee. This must not be taken in an absolute, but in a comparative sense. He contrasts this clause with the preceding; for he promises that he will never chastise his people so severely as not to mitigate the severity of the punishment. Although therefore tyrants indulge in wanton and unbridled rage, and Satan employ his utmost efforts in attacking the Church, and the Lord give him a loose rein, in order to punish our ingratitude, yet he will never suffer the Church to be ruined.

10. *For the mountains shall indeed be moved.* He confirms the former statement, and declares that sooner shall the whole world be turned upside down, than his mercy shall fail. It would be idle to put the question here, how "the mountains shall be moved, or the hills shall shake;" for the comparison is drawn from those things which appear to be strongest and most deeply rooted, in order to shew that the

foundation of the Church is far more durable. "Mountains" are very strong, and earthquakes do not so frequently take place in them as in plains; and therefore the Lord declares that, although that vast and huge mass of "mountains be moved," or the heavens fall, yet his covenant shall endure, and his mercy towards the Church shall not fail. In this sense it is said in the Psalm, "The Lord shall reign, the world shall be established." (Ps. xciii. 1.) In another passage it is even said, "Though the heavens pass away, the Church of God shall remain unshaken." (Ps. cii. 26, 28.)

My mercy. In the word "mercy," it ought to be remarked what is the nature of the foundation of the covenant; for we can have no friendship with God, unless he have mercy upon us, and receive us by free grace.[1]

The covenant of my peace. He calls it "the covenant of peace," because the Lord offers to us all that belongs to perfect happiness; as the Hebrew writers also, under the word "peace," include all posterity. Since therefore this covenant contains solid and perfect happiness, it follows that all who are excluded from it are miserable.

Saith Jehovah, who hath compassion on thee. By saying that it is he "who hath compassion" on her, he again confirms what was formerly said, that he will be reconciled in no other way, and for no other reason, than because he is compassionate and ready to pardon.

11. *Thou wretched.* He continues the same subject, and promises not only that the Church shall be restored to her ancient splendour, but that God will cause her to be adorned with attire of greater magnificence, as if it had been wholly composed of precious stones. All this was expressed by Haggai in a single word, when he said, "The glory of the latter temple shall be greater than the glory of the former." (Hag. ii. 10.) As to the names of the jewels[2] which are here described by

[1] "S'il ne nous reçoit gratuitement, en pardonnant nos offenses;" "Unless he receive us through free grace, by pardoning our offences."

[2] "These seem to be general images to express beauty, magnificence, purity, strength, and solidity, agreeably to the ideas of the eastern nations; and to have never been intended to be strictly scrutinized, or minutely and particularly explained, as if they had each of them some precise moral or spiritual meaning."—*Lowth.*

the Prophet, and about which even the Hebrew writers are not agreed, we need not give ourselves much trouble, provided we understand the meaning of the passage.

This earnest address is exceedingly well fitted for soothing the grief of believers; for it represents the Church, which was ready to be drowned, as being now rescued by him from shipwreck. Whenever therefore we shall see her violently shaken by tempests, and weighed down by a load of distresses, and deprived of all consolation, let us remember that these are the very circumstances which induce God to give assistance.

12. *And I will lay thy windows with pearls.* By these metaphors he shews that the condition of the Church, as has been formerly said, will be far better than at any former period. The Church is compared to a building, which is customary in every part of Scripture. (Jer. xxiv. 6; Matt. xvi. 18.) For this reason he now draws a picture of a costly and magnificent structure. But it ought to be remarked, that the Prophet represents God as the architect of this building; for this work ought to be entirely ascribed to him alone.

But it may be asked what the Prophet means by "carbuncles, sapphires, pearls," and other kinds of jewels; for by a similar metaphor Paul meant doctrine. "As a wise architect," says he, "I have laid the foundation." And again, "If any man build on this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest." (1 Cor. iii. 10-13.) Whether or not this be the Prophet's meaning, will appear from the following verse.

13. *For all thy children.* I consider that the copulative ו, (*vau,*) "and," here, as in many other passages, denotes *for;* and hence we may easily conclude that Isaiah spoke not of doctrine, but of men, of which the spiritual building of the Church is reared. It is by doctrine, indeed, that the Church is built; but the building of it is effected by assembling men together, and reducing them to a state of obedience to God. The difference then between Paul and Isaiah is this, that Paul makes those "precious stones" relate to doctrine, and Isaiah makes them relate to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are bestowed on men, in order that the Church may

be built of them. It is proper to observe the diversity of gifts with which the Lord adorns his Church; for all are not "emeralds," and all are not "carbuncles," but the Lord assigns to every one his rank according to his own pleasure. (Eph. iv. 11.)

Taught by Jehovah. It deserves attention, that all that belongs to the ornament of the Church, proceeds from no other source than from the grace of God; for if we are "carbuncles" and "sapphires" in consequence of our being taught by the Lord, it follows that this does not proceed from nature. Now there are two ways in which the Lord teaches us; by external preaching, and by the secret revelation of the Holy Spirit. What kind of teaching the Prophet means is explained by Christ, when he quotes this passage; and therefore we ought not to seek a better interpreter. "It is written in the prophets," says he, "All shall be taught by God. Every man who hath heard and learned from the Father cometh to me." (John vi. 45.) If this passage were to be understood as relating to external preaching, the conclusion which Christ draws from it would not be well founded; for it does not follow, "The Gospel is preached, and therefore all believe." Many oppose, others openly scorn, and others are hypocrites. Those only "who have been foreordained to life" (Acts xiii. 48) are sincerely teachable, and are entitled to be ranked among the disciples. The Gospel is preached indiscriminately to the elect and the reprobate; but the elect alone come to Christ, because they have been "taught by God," and therefore to them the Prophet undoubtedly refers.

This makes it evident in what way we become living and precious stones for building the temple of God. It is when the Lord has formed and polished us by his Spirit, and has added to the external preaching of the word the internal efficacy of the Spirit. Hence we learn how great is the depravity of the human mind, which cannot be bent and formed anew, unless the Lord move it by the power and efficacy of his Spirit. Isaiah has connected both modes of teaching, the internal and the external; for he gives the appellation of "children of the Church" to those who are "taught by the

Lord." If they are her children, they must then have been conceived in her womb and nourished by her, first "with milk, and next with solid food," as Paul says, (1 Cor. iii. 2,) till they "grow up and arrive at manhood." (Eph. iv. 13.)

Thus the external administration of the word is necessary if we wish to be disciples; and this shews the extreme madness of fanatics, who abuse this passage for the purpose of overturning the preaching of the word and the ministry which the Church enjoys; for they cannot be "the children" of the Church, if they do not allow themselves to be educated in her. In vain will they boast of secret revelations; for the Spirit does not teach any but those who submit to the ministry of the Church, and consequently they are the disciples of the devil, and not of God, who reject the order which he has appointed; for we see that these two things, "Children of the Church" and "Taught by God," are united in such a manner that they cannot be God's disciples who refuse to be taught in the Church. They ought likewise to be properly distinguished, as Isaiah also distinguishes them, that we may not apply to men what ought to be ascribed to the efficacy of the Spirit; but at the same time they ought to be joined together, so that we may know that in this matter God chooses to employ the agency of men.

Besides, we are taught by this passage that the calling of God is efficacious in the elect. Augustine examines this passage judiciously, and applies it skilfully against the Pelagians, who extolled man's free-will in opposition to the grace of God. They appeared, indeed, to ascribe something to the grace of God, but in such a manner that, when they brought it forward, they gave to it an inferior place to man's free-will; just as the Papists do, who assert that any person can either receive or reject it. "But" (says Augustine) "all shall be taught by God. Now, God's disciples are efficaciously taught, and follow his calling." He likewise adds that passage of John's Gospel which we have quoted. This shews clearly that it is not from free choice made by man, and which is capable of being bent in either direction, that it proceeds.

From these words it ought also to be observed how highly

the Lord values his doctrine, by means of which he admits us into his building, so that we become "pearls, sapphires, and carbuncles;" for they who wish to build the Church by rejecting the doctrine of the word, build a hog's sty, and not the Church of God. We see also what opinion we ought to form about implicit faith, about which the Papists yelp, who wish men to become fools, that they may suffer themselves to be imposed upon; for, since we must be taught by God, it is not reasonable that we should resemble beasts.

It may be asked, were not the prophets also, and the patriarchs, and other believers under the Law, taught by God? They undoubtedly were; but here the Prophet spoke by comparison, because there is a more abundant revelation in Christ, and the Lord hath spoken so plainly as to give a public manifestation that he is the teacher of the Church, and also to gain many disciples. This passage agrees with one in the Prophet Jeremiah. "Every one shall not teach his neighbour, nor a man his brother; for all shall know me from the least even to the greatest, saith Jehovah." (Jer. xxxi. 34.) Accordingly, if in ancient times it was necessary that all the children of God should be disciples of the Holy Spirit, much more in the present day, seeing that this prediction relates strictly to the kingdom of Christ.

And great peace. By the word "peace" he denotes happiness, that is, all prosperity. And hence we may infer what is the true happiness of men. It is, when God enlightens our understandings, so that we embrace the salvation which has been revealed to us in Christ; for, so long as we are destitute of that knowledge, we are at the greatest possible distance from happiness; because even God's blessings, till they are sanctified by faith, become a curse to us.

14. *In righteousness.* He means that God will be the maker and architect of his Church. I am aware that there are some who explain it differently, and who think that "righteousness" means "good-works." And indeed that exposition has some plausibility, arising from the Prophet having spoken about doctrine; for we are taught for this very purpose, that we may lead a pious and holy life. But the Prophet's meaning was different, namely, that the Church

shall be restored under God's guidance, who wishes to be its guardian and defender. He contrasts "righteousness" with the violence and oppression by which the Church has been thrown down, or, at least, he expresses "stability," as if he had said that it shall not be a frail building, or one that might impose on men for a short time by mere deceitfulness of appearance; because God will sincerely defend his work, and, being "righteous," will not only restore it completely, but will afterwards preserve it in safety for a long period. Thus, although men are leagued in every way for the destruction of the Church, they will gain nothing; for the Lord guards her by his "righteousness." We have formerly[1] seen this form of expression; and on this account I think that the interpretation which I have given is more simple, though some may think that another interpetation is more plausible.

15. *Behold, he who assembleth shall assemble.* The general import is, that, although many rise up for the purpose of overwhelming the Church, yet all their efforts and attacks shall fail; and he appears to promise God's assistance not only against external foes, but against foes that are domestic and internal. Many "assemble" in the bosom of the Church, as if they wished to join themselves to her, but afterwards carry on internal war. These words are commonly translated, "By gathering he shall gather himself against thee," and are generally understood to relate to all the enemies of the Church of every kind. That interpretation is most generally approved; nor do I object to it, provided that it be acknowledged to include the fraud, and ambush, and treachery by which the Church is attacked. Yet I have no doubt that here the meaning is the same as in Psalm ii. 1, namely, the conspiracies and insurrections of the Gentiles against Christ and the Church of God; for not a single nation only, but various nations rise up against her.

It is probable, however, that here he expressly joins together domestic foes and those who from without had penetrated even into her bosom; for he says, *In thee, Against thee,* that is, "They shall attack thee within, in the

[1] See Com. on Isaiah, Vol [illegible] p. 411.

midst of thee." In a word, he shews that the Church will not enjoy such peace as not to be attacked by many adversaries. But it may be thought that these statements are contradictory; for he formerly said that she would be far from terror and oppression, and now he says that there shall be conspiracies within her bosom. I reply, the Prophet instantly added this, that believers might not promise to themselves a state of peace in the world, as if they had no annoyance to suffer from wicked men and hypocrites. The defence of the Church against oppression and slander shall be of such a kind as not to preserve her from carrying on uninterrupted war with enemies; for Satan will raise up against her every day new attacks, so that she can never be at rest. These words may therefore be regarded as a correction of the preceding statement, in order that believers may always carry their weapons of war, and may not promise to themselves repose.

Without me. A promise is added, that the Lord will nevertheless preserve them in the midst of dangers. *Without God* signifies "in vain" or "unsuccessfully;" for he means that the attacks of wicked men, though they do their utmost,[1] shall utterly fail. They rush forward with blind fury, but it is the Lord's hand alone that gives prosperity. He alludes to what was formerly said, (Isa. xli. 25,) that the Babylonians should come, under God's guidance, to destroy Judea. At that time the people were ruined, because they had God for their enemy; but now, because "without God," that is, without his guidance, the enemies shall attack her, they shall be ashamed and turn back. This is more fully expressed by what immediately follows—

He who shall assemble in thee shall fall against thee. That is, "All that he shall attempt against thee shall fall back on his own head. Though the whole world rise up against thee, it shall be crushed by its own weight." The phrase, *in thee*, deserves notice; for when the Lord drives our enemies to a distance, we are confident, but if they come near us, we fall into despair. Therefore he says, "Although

[1] "Encore qu'ils facent du pis qu'ils pourront." "Though they do the worst that they can."

they penetrate even into thy bowels, the Lord will destroy them, and will deliver thee."

16. *Behold, I have created the workmen.* The Lord shews how easily and readily he delivers his Church from the base attacks of wicked men; for they can do nothing but so far as the Lord permits them, though he makes use of them as instruments for chastising his people. Moreover, this may be appropriately viewed as referring both to the Babylonians and to other foes who afterwards distressed the elect people. If the former sense be preferred, God undertakes to prove that he can easily drive away those whom he led against them, and cast down those whom he raised up. If it be supposed to refer to Antiochus and others of the same description, the meaning will not be very different; namely, that they too shall not be permitted to hurt them, because they cannot even move a finger but by God's direction.

But it may be thought that the Prophet contradicts himself; for in the former verse he said, that wicked men attack the Church "without the Lord," and now he says that they fight under God as their leader, that under his guidance and direction they may waste and destroy. I reply, we must keep in view the contrast; namely, that the Lord had raised up the Babylonians to destroy the Church. We must observe the metaphor of the deluge, by which he denoted utter extermination; for at that time the Church might be said to have been drowned, and he made use of the Babylonians as his agents for that purpose. But he solemnly declares that henceforth he is resolved to restrain his anger, so as never to permit the Church to be destroyed by her enemies, though he chastise her by his own hand. The object at which the enemies of the Church aim, and which they labour with all their might to accomplish, is to ruin and destroy the Church; but the Lord restrains their attacks; for "without him," that is, without his command, they do nothing. Some explain the meaning to be, that "the workman has been created for his work," that is, that he may effect his own destruction, and the waster, to destroy himself. But the former sense appears to me more simple.

I have created the waster to destroy. When the Lord says that he "createth the waster," this does not refer merely to the nature with which men are born, but to the very act of "wasting." And yet we must not, on that account, lay blame on God, as if he were the author of the unjust cruelty which dwells in men alone; for God does not give assent to their wicked inclinations, but regulates their efforts by his secret providence, and employs them as the instruments of his anger. But on this subject we have treated in the exposition of other passages.

17. *Every weapon.* He again infers what has been already said, that wicked men, even though they exert themselves to the utmost, will gain nothing; for their attacks are guided and restrained by the secret purpose of God. He makes use of the word "every," meaning by it that wicked men will have the means of attempting many and diversified methods for destroying the Church, but that their efforts shall be vain and fruitless,[1] for the Lord will restrain them. Heaven permits them, indeed, to a great extent, in order to try the patience of believers; but, when God thinks proper, he strips them of their strength and armour.

And every tongue. After having spoken of the "weapons" with which wicked men attack the Church, he expressly mentions the "tongue;" because no other "weapon" is so deadly and destructive. Not only do they revile, and slander, and defame the servants of God, but, as far as lies in their power, they extinguish the truth of God, and alienate the hearts of men from it; which ought to distress us more than if life were taken from us a hundred times. Besides, good and upright men find slander to be more distressing, and to inflict more severe pain than any bodily stroke; and, therefore, there was good reason for mentioning this deadly "weapon."

That shall rise up against thee in judgment. When he says that tongues "rise up in judgment," he means that wicked men are so daring and insolent, that they openly attack and annoy the children of God. He adds that this

[1] "Mais tout s'evanouira comme fumee." "But all shall vanish away like smoke."

is done "in judgment;" because they hold out plausible pretexts, which give them the appearance of having a just cause. In like manner, the Papists, when they call us heretics, schismatics, and dogs, plead against us, as it were, "in judgment," and wish to be regarded as the defenders of catholic truth, though they maintain falsehood and idolatry. And yet so plausible are the pretexts by which their slanders are covered, that they produce very strong hatred against us among those who are ignorant of our cause. But although they assail us by arms, and by the "tongue," and by "weapons" of every kind, yet, relying on this prediction, let us hope that we shall be victorious; for victory is here promised to us, and, since we are certain of it, we ought to fight valiantly and with unshaken courage.

This is the inheritance. He shews that the Lord has granted this to believers, as it were, by a right of "inheritance," so that they shall never be deprived of it; for, as no title is more certain than that of an heir, so he shews that there is nothing of which the Lord's servants ought to be more certain than of his constant guardianship and preservation, by which he defends them against all dangers.

And their righteousness from me. "Righteousness" here denotes what is conveyed by us in the ordinary expression, (*Leur droit,*) "Their right." In a word, he means that the Lord will defend his people, so as to protect their innocence. Whenever, therefore, we are attacked and injured by men, let us learn to betake ourselves forthwith to the Lord; for, when we seek other assistance, the consequence is, that we are deprived of his guardianship and protection.

CHAPTER LV.

1. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.

2. Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and

1. Heus sitientes omnes, venite ad aquas; et qui non habetis pecuniam, venite, emite, et comedite. Venite, inquam; emite absque pecunia, et absque ullo pretio vinum et lac.

2. Quare expenditis pecuniam, non in panem? et laborem vestrum,

your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

3. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

4. Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5. Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not; and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8. For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

9. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater;

11. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

12. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

13. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of

non ad saturitatem? Audite audiendo me, et comedite bonum, et oblectet se in pinguedine anima vestra.

3. Inclinate aurem vestram, et venite ad me; audite, et vivet anima vestra. Et percutiam vobiscum fœdus seculi, misericordias Davidis fideles.

4. Ecce testem populis dedi eum, ducem et præceptorem populis.

5. Ecce gentem quam ignoras vocabis; et gens quæ te non cognovit current ad te; propter Iehovam Deum tuum, et Sanctum Israel; quia glorificavit te.

6. Quærite Iehovam, dum invenitur; invocate eum, dum propè est.

7. Derelinquat impius viam suam, et vir iniquus cogitationes suas; revertatur ad Iehovam, et miserebitur ejus; ad Deum nostrum, quia multus est ad remittendum.

8. Neque enim cogitationes meæ cogitationes vestræ, neque viæ vestræ viæ meæ, dicit Iehova.

9. Nam quanto excelsiores sunt cœli terra, tantum superant viæ meæ vias vestras, et cogitationes meæ cogitationes vestras.

10. Certè, quemadmodum descendit pluvia et nix e cœlis, neque illuc revertitur, sed irrigat terram, et eam facit concipere et germinare, ut det semen seminanti et panem comedenti;

11. Sic erit verbum meum quod egredietur ex ore meo; non redibit ad me vacuum, donec faciat quod volo, et successum afferat, quò misi ipsum.

12. Itaque cum lætitia egredieemini, et cum pace deducemini; montes et colles erumpent coram vobis in gaudium, et omnia ligna agri plaudent manu.

13. Pro rubo ascendet abies, et pro urtica (*vel, spina*) myrtus (*vel,*

the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

ulmus) crescet; et erit Iehovæ in nomen, in signum perpetuum quod non auferetur.

1. *Ho, all that are thirsty.* Here the Prophet describes in lofty terms of commendation the goodness of God, which was to be poured down more copiously and abundantly than before under the reign of Christ, "in whose hand are hid all the treasures" (Col. ii. 3) of the grace of God; for in him God fully explains his mind to us; so that the saying of John is actually fulfilled, "We have all drawn from his fulness, and have received grace for grace." (John i. 16.) The fathers were, indeed, partakers of that divine goodness and spiritual kindness which is here mentioned. "How great," says David, "is thy goodness, which hath been laid up for them that fear thee!" (Ps. xxxi. 19.) But he hath poured it out far more liberally and abundantly in Christ. Thus, it is a remarkable commendation of the grace of God, which is exhibited to us in the kingdom of Christ; for the Prophet does not instruct us what has been done once, but also what is done every day, while the Lord invites us by his doctrine to the enjoyment of all blessings.

Come to the waters. Some view the word "waters" as referring to the doctrine of the Gospel, and others to the Holy Spirit; but neither of these expositions, in my opinion, is correct. They who think that it denotes the doctrine of the Gospel, and who contrast it with the law, (of which the Jewish writers think that the Prophet speaks in this passage,) include only one part of what the Prophet meant. They who expound it as denoting the Holy Spirit have somewhat more plausibility, and quote that passage of John's Gospel, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (John iv. 10.) And a little after, Christ appears to expound this passage when he says, "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the water which I shall give to him shall never thirst; but the water which I shall give to him shall become

in him a fountain of water springing up to everlasting life." (John iv. 13, 14.)

But I have no doubt that under these words, "waters, milk, wine, bread," Isaiah includes all that is necessary for spiritual life; for the metaphors are borrowed from those kinds of food which are in daily use amongst us. As we are nourished by "bread, wine, milk, and water," so in like manner let us know that our souls are fed and supported by the doctrine of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit, and other gifts of Christ.

The Prophet exclaims, as with a voice above the usual pitch, *Ho!* for so great is the sluggishness of men that it is very difficult to arouse them. They do not feel their wants, though they are hungry; nor do they desire food, which they greatly need; and therefore that indifference must be shaken off by loud and incessant cries. So much the more base and shameful is the indolence of those who are deaf to this exhortation, and who, even when they are so sharply urged forward, still indulge in their slothfulness. Besides, the invitation is general; for there is no man who is not in want of those "waters," and to whom Christ is not necessary; and therefore he invites all indiscriminately, without any respect of persons. But men are so miserable that, although they know that they are in need of Christ, they contrive methods by which they may be deprived of this benefit, and rather believe the devil, who offers various obstructions, than this kind invitation.

We must therefore inquire what is the true preparation for receiving this grace. The Prophet describes it by the word "thirsty." Those who are puffed up with vain confidence and are satiated, or who, intoxicated by earthly appetites, do not feel thirst of soul, will not receive Christ; because they have no relish for spiritual grace. They resemble those persons who are in want of nourishment, but who, because they are filled and swollen with wind, loathe food, or who, being carried away by their own vain imaginations, feed on their own stupidity, as if they were in want of nothing. The consequence is, that they who are puffed up with pride or a false opinion of their own righteousness,

or whom the allurements of the flesh have seized with lethargy, despise or reject the grace of God. It is therefore necessary that we have "thirst," that is, an ardent desire, in order that it may be possible for us to receive so great blessings.

Buy without money. He does not mean that there are any persons who have money in abundance, but the words ought to be explained thus. "Although they are poor, although they are sunk in the deepest poverty, yet the way is open for them to come to Christ, through whom these blessings are freely bestowed." "But how is it possible," it will be said, "to buy without a price?" I reply, "buying" denotes figuratively the method by which we procure anything; and שבר (*shābăr*) is here put for "procure," and "price" for labour or industry, or any other method by which men obtain anything. He shews that we are poor and utterly destitute, and that we have nothing by which we can become entitled to God's favour; but that he kindly invites us, in order that he may freely bestow everything without any recompense.

2. *Wherefore do ye spend money?*[1] He complains of the ingratitude and madness of men, in rejecting or disdaining the kindness of God who offers all things freely, and yet harassing themselves greatly about various trifles which cannot yield them any advantage. Men are so enchanted by the devil, that they choose rather to wander through deserts, and to vex themselves in vain, than to rely on the grace which God offers to them. The experience of the present age abundantly shews that the Prophet not only expostulated with his own nation, but exclaimed against all men, to whatever age they might belong; for all the posterity of Adam have been seized with such madness that, in seeking the road to a heavenly life,[2] they altogether go astray, and

[1] "Spend. Heb. Weigh." (Eng. Ver.) "In the first clause there is reference to the primitive custom of weighing instead of counting money, from which have arisen several of the most familiar denominations, such as the Hebrew 'shekel,' the Greek 'talent,' the French 'livre,' and the English 'pound.' The essential idea here is that of paying."—*Alexander.*

[2] "En cherchant le chemin de vie eternelle." "In seeking the road to eternal life."

follow their own vain opinions rather than the voice of God.

The Prophet does not complain of the slothfulness of those who, altogether forgetful of themselves and of God, take no concern about the spiritual life of the soul; (there are many such persons;) but of those who desire life, and yet do not understand the method or way of obtaining it, and wander in uncertainty through deserts and untrodden paths. Here, therefore, are condemned all the methods which men contrive, in opposition to the Word of God, for obtaining salvation, and they are pronounced to be useless expenses; for by the word "money" he denotes all the industry, study, or labour which belongs to man. Not that God values a single farthing all our idle attempts to worship him, but because labours foolishly undertaken are reckoned valuable by the judgment of the flesh.

And your labour, not so as to be satisfied. We see that by the word "bread" is here meant the same as was formerly meant by "waters," and that he gives the name "labour" to that which he formerly called "money." As if he had said, "Men toil without any advantage; for, when they follow their own inventions, however eagerly they may vex and weary themselves, they have no right to expect any reward." Thus he affirms that they who labour in an inconsiderate manner cannot "be satisfied;" for they who forsake God, and attempt new methods of salvation, can never "be satisfied." "They feed on wind," as Hosea says. (Hos. xii. 1.) They may, indeed, imagine that they are full, when they are swelled with vain confidence, but are like persons who, in consequence of being swollen with wind, do not perceive their hunger. Yet it would be better for them to be sore pressed by hunger and thirst, that it might lead them to call on the Lord with earnestness of heart, as it is said in the Psalm, "My soul is as a thirsty land before thee." (Ps. cxliii. 6.) But bread alone, or water alone, would not be enough to "satisfy," and by neither of them could life be supported; and that is the reason why the Prophet has made use of a variety of terms, in order to shew that the Lord abundantly supplies everything that is necessary for life,

that we may not think that we ought to seek aid from any other quarter.

Hear ye by hearing me.[1] Because every person is led into error by his own counsel, and all who neglect God vanish away in wicked imaginations, the Prophet here adds the remedy, which is, that we must depend entirely on the mouth of God. Whoever shall submit to his word will have no reason to fear that he shall spend his strength on things of no value. Here we see the amazing goodness of God, who offers his grace to men, though they are unthankful and unworthy.

But he adds the condition; for there is no way by which we can enter into life but by "hearing" him; and as the cause of our destruction is, that we are deaf to the voice of God, so the road to life is open, if we lend our ears to him.[2] In order to make a deeper impression upon us, he repeats the same admonition, and doubles the same word, "Hear ye by hearing;" and, in order to draw us more gently, he solemnly declares that it depends entirely on ourselves whether or not he will "delight" us even to fulness with all abundance of blessings.

3. *Incline your ear.* This assemblage of words makes still more evident what I slightly mentioned a little before, that God leaves nothing undone which is fitted to correct and arouse our tardiness. Yet there is an implied reproof; for they must be excessively stupid who, when they are so gently called, do not instantly obey. This is a remarkable passage, from which we see that our whole happiness lies in obeying the word of God. When God speaks in this manner, the object which he has in view is to lead us to life;[3] and therefore the blame lies wholly with ourselves, because we disregard this saving and life-giving word.

And come unto me. If God only commanded what we ought to do, he would indeed lay down the method of obtaining life, but without advantage; for the Law, which proceeded from the mouth of God, is the minister of death; but

[1] "Hearken diligently unto me."—Eng. Ver.

[2] "Si nous l'escoutons attentivement." "If we listen to him attentively."

[3] "De nous amener à salut." "To lead us to salvation."

when he invites us "to himself," when he adopts us as children, when he promises pardon of sin and sanctification, the consequence is, that they who hear obtain life from him. We ought, therefore, to take into view the kind of doctrine which contains life, in order that we may seek our salvation from it; and hence we infer that there is no hope of salvation if we do not obey God and his word. This reproves all mankind, so that they can plead no excuse for their ignorance; for he who refuses to hear can have no solid argument to defend his cause.

These repetitions describe the patience of God in calling us; for he does not merely invite us once, but when he sees that we are sluggish, he gives a second and even a third warning, in order to conquer our hardheartedness. Thus he does not all at once reject those who despise him, but after having frequently invited them.

Besides, this is a description of the nature of faith, when he bids us "come to himself." We ought to hear the Lord in such a manner that faith shall follow; for they who by faith receive the word of God have laid aside their desires and despised the world, and may be said to have broken their chains, so that they readily and cheerfully "draw near to God." But faith cannot be formed without hearing, (Rom. x. 17;) that is, without understanding the word of God, and so he bids us "hear" before we "come to him." Thus, whenever faith is mentioned, let us remember that it must be joined to the word, in which it has its foundation.

And I will strike a covenant of eternity with you. It is asked, Did not the Jews formerly enter into an everlasting covenant with God? For he appears to promise something that is new and uncommon. I reply, nothing new is here promised for which the Lord did not formerly enter into an engagement with his people; but it is a renewal and confirmation of the covenant, that the Jews might not think that the covenant of God was made void on account of the long-continued banishment. For when they were banished from the country that had been promised to them,[1] when

[1] "Hors du pays qui leur avoit esté promis et donné." "Out of the country that had been promised and given to them."

they had no temple or sacrifices, or any marks of the "covenant" except circumcision, who would not have concluded that it was all over with them? This mode of expression, therefore, Isaiah accommodated to the capacity of the people, that they might know that the covenant into which God entered with the fathers was firm, sure, and eternal, and not changeable or temporary.

This is also what he means by *the mercies of David*, but by this phrase he declares that it was a covenant of free grace; for it was founded on nothing else than the absolute goodness of God. Whenever, therefore, the word "covenant" occurs in Scripture, we ought at the same time to call to remembrance the word "grace." By calling them "the *faithful* mercies of David,"[1] he declares that he will be faithful in it, and at the same time states indirectly that he is faithful and steadfast, and cannot be accused of falsehood, as if he had broken his covenant; that the Jews, on the other hand, are covenant-breakers and traitors, (for they have revolted from him,) but that he cannot repent of his covenant or his promise.

He calls them "the mercies *of David*," because this covenant, which has now been solemnly confirmed, was made in the hand "of David." The Lord indeed entered into a covenant with Abraham, (Gen. xv. 5; xvii. 7,) afterwards confirmed it by Moses, (Ex. ii. 24; xxxiii. 1,) and finally ratified this very covenant in the hand of David, that it might be eternal. (2 Sam. vii. 12.) Whenever, therefore, the Jews thought of a Redeemer, that is, of their salvation, they ought to have remembered "David" as a mediator who represented Christ; for David must not here be regarded as a private individual, but as bearing this title and character. Yet some regard must be had to the time when this prophecy was uttered; for, since the rank of the kingdom had been obliterated, and the name of the royal family had become mean and contemptible during the captivity in Babylon, it might seem as if, through the ruin of that family, the truth of God had fallen into decay; and therefore he bids them contemplate by faith the throne of David, which had been cast down.

[1] "The sure mercies of David."—Eng. Ver.

4. *Behold, I have given him a witness to the peoples.* The Prophet now explains more fully the reason why he mentioned "David." It was because into his hand had been committed the promise of a Redeemer that was to come, and this discourse might be expressed with a view to his public character, so far as he was the surety of the covenant; for he did not act for himself individually, but was appointed to be a sort of mediator between God and the people. Yet it is beyond all doubt that the Prophet leads them directly to Christ, to whom the transition from David was easy and natural; as if he had said, "That successor of David shall come forth, by whose hand perfect salvation and happiness hath been promised."

By calling him "a witness," he means that the covenant into which he entered shall be ratified and confirmed in Christ. There is a weighty meaning in the word "witness;" for he clearly shews that this covenant shall be proved in Christ, by whom the truth of God shall be made manifest. He will testify that God is not false. But this testimony consists in doctrine; and if it were not added, we should receive little benefit from Christ's coming, as it is said, "I will publish the command." (Ps. ii. 7.) In this sense also Isaiah said in another passage, that Christ will have a mouth like a sword or an arrow. (Is. xlix. 2.)

A leader and instructor. This is added, in order to procure attention to his doctrine; for, if we do not hear him when he speaks, and if we do not embrace by assured faith what he makes known to us concerning the Father's good pleasure, his power is set aside. In like manner, the name of Christ is pronounced loudly enough by the Papists; but since they refuse to receive him as a teacher and instructor, and acknowledge him merely by name, their boasting is idle and ridiculous.

To the peoples. This was added for the purpose of amplification, because the Church could not be restored to her ancient dignity, or be enlarged, but by assembling the Gentiles; and therefore it was necessary that the voice of Christ should pierce even to the remotest countries, because he has

been appointed a "witness, leader, and instructor" to the whole human race.

5. *Behold, thou shalt call a nation which thou knowest not.* Isaiah explains more largely what he formerly glanced at by a single word; for he declares that Christ shall be the "leader," not of a single people, but of all the peoples. "To call" here denotes possession; for there is a mutual relation between the words "call" and "answer." Christ therefore "calls" in the exercise of authority, as one who is invested with supreme power; and he "calls" the Gentiles, that he may bring them into a state of obedience, and may cause them to submit to his word.

He says that they shall be ready to obey, though hitherto they were unknown; not that the Son of God, by whom they were created, did not know them, but because he paid no regard to them[1] until they began to be reckoned as belonging to the Church. God had in a peculiar manner called the Jews; the Gentiles appeared to be excluded as if they did not at all belong to him. But now, addressing Christ,[2] he promises that Christ shall constrain the Gentiles to obey him, though formerly they were opposed to his authority. He expresses this still more plainly in what immediately follows.

A nation that knew not thee shall run to thee. By putting the verb יָרוּצוּ, (*yārūtzū,*) *shall run,* in the plural number, he intends to explain more fully that the Church shall be collected out of various peoples, so that they who were formerly scattered shall be gathered into one body; for the word "run" relates to harmony of faith. When he now says that the Gentiles "did not know Christ," he employs the expression in a different sense from that in which he said, a little

[1] "Pource qu'elles ont esté mesprisees et rejettees." "Because they were despised and rejected."

[2] "The question which has chiefly divided interpreters, in reference to this verse, is, whether the object of address is the Messiah or the Church. The former opinion is maintained by Calvin, Sanctus, and others; the latter by Grotius and Vitringa. The masculine forms prove nothing either way, because the Church is sometimes presented in the person of Israel, and sometimes personified as a woman. The most natural supposition is, that after speaking of the Messiah, he now turns to him and addresses him directly."—*Alexander.*

before, that they were unknown to Christ; for all heathens and unbelievers are declared, in a literal sense, to be in a state of ignorance, in consequence of their being destitute of the light of heavenly doctrine, without which they cannot have the knowledge of God. Although by nature the knowledge of God is engraven on the hearts of all men, yet it is so confused and dark, and entangled by many errors, that, if the light of the word be not added to it, by knowing they know not God, but wander miserably in darkness.

Here we have a remarkable testimony of God as to the calling of the Gentiles, for whom, as well as for the Jews, Christ was appointed. Hence also we learn that God takes care of us, if we bow to his authority, and not only such care as he takes of all the creatures, but such care as a father takes of his children.

Yet the word "run" describes more fully the efficacy of this calling, for the object of it is, that we shall obey God, that we shall readily and cheerfully place ourselves before him as teachable, and ready to comply with any expression of his will; in like manner, as Paul shews that obedience is the end of our calling. (Rom. i. 5; xvi. 26.) But as the Gentiles were at a great distance from God, it was necessary that they should labour earnestly to surmount every obstacle, that they might draw near to him.

For the sake of Jehovah thy God. He shews what is the source of this readiness and cheerfulness. It is because the Gentiles shall know that they have to do with God; for, if we contemplate Christ merely as man, we shall not be powerfully affected by his doctrine, but when we behold God in him, an astonishing warmth of affection is kindled in our hearts. Now, Christ is here described as a minister appointed by God to perform his work; for he assumes the character of a servant along with our flesh, and in this respect there is no impropriety in his being subjected to the Father, as if he belonged to the rank of other men.

Yet we ought to keep in remembrance what we have frequently seen as to the union of the Head and the members; for what is now said concerning Christ relates to the whole body, and therefore the glorifying is common to the whole

Church. Yet Christ always holds the highest rank; for, being raised on high, he is exalted above the whole world, that to him there may be a concourse of all nations. In a word, he shews that men obey Christ and submit to his doctrine, because God hath exalted him, and hath determined to make his pre-eminence known to all men; for otherwise the preaching of the gospel would be of little use, if God did not give power and efficacy to his doctrine by the Spirit.

6. *Seek ye Jehovah.* After having spoken of the good success of the gospel among the Gentiles, who formerly were strangers to the kingdom of God, he urges the Jews to be ashamed of loitering while others run; for since they were the first who were called, it is shameful that they should be last. This exhortation, therefore, relates strictly to the Jews, to whom the example of the Gentiles is held out in order to excite their jealousy; in the same manner as the Lord hath foretold that "he would provoke the Jews to jealousy by a foolish nation." (Deut. xxxii. 21.)

While he is found. "The time of finding" is here used not exactly in the same sense as in Psalm xxxii. 6,[1] but as the time when God offers himself to us, as in other passages he has limited a fixed day for his good-pleasure and our salvation. (Is. xlix. 8.) Yet I readily admit that it likewise denotes the time when necessity prompts us to seek God's assistance; but we ought chiefly to remember that God is sought at a seasonable time, when of his own accord he advances to meet us; for in vain shall indolent and sluggish persons lament that they had been deprived of that grace which they rejected. The Lord sometimes endures our sluggishness, and bears with us; but if ultimately he do not succeed, he will withdraw, and will bestow his grace on others. For this reason Christ exhorts us to walk while it is day, for the night cometh when the means of pursuing our journey shall be taken from us. (John xii. 35.) We ought to draw high consolation from being assured that it is

[1] "In a time when thou mayest be found. Heb., in a time of finding." (Eng. Ver.) Our author's rendering is, "Therefore shall every one that is meek pray unto thee in the time of finding thee." In his commentary he makes reference to this passage of Isaiah.—*Ed.*

not in vain for us to seek God. "Seek," says Christ, "and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened; ask, and it shall be given to you." (Matt. vii. 7.)

Call upon him while he is near. The word "call" may here be taken in a general sense; but I think that it denotes one description of "seeking" God, which is of more importance than all the others, as if he commanded us to betake ourselves to him by prayers and supplications. He says that he is "near," when he opens the door and gently invites us to come to him, or when he comes forth publicly, so that we do not need to seek him through long windings. But we must attend to Paul's definition, who tells us that it denotes the preaching of the gospel. (Rom. x. 8.) "The Lord is nigh," (Philip. iv. 5,) and exhibits himself to us, when the voice of the gospel cries aloud; and we do not need to seek far, or to make long circuits, as unbelievers do; for he exhibits himself to us in his word, that we, on our part, may draw near to him.

7. *Let the wicked man forsake his way.* He confirms the former statement; for, having formerly called men to receive the grace of God, he now describes more largely the manner of receiving it. We know how hypocrites loudly call on God whenever they desire relief from their distresses, and yet shut up their hearts by wicked obstinacy;[1] and therefore, that the Jews may not be hypocritical in seeking God, he exhorts them to sincere piety. Hence we infer that the doctrine of repentance ought always to accompany the promise of salvation; for in no other way can men taste the goodness of God than by abhorring themselves on account of their sins, and renouncing themselves and the world. And indeed no man will sincerely desire to be reconciled to God and to obtain pardon of sins till he is moved by a true and earnest repentance.

By three forms of expression he describes the nature of repentance,—*first,* "Let the wicked man forsake his way;" *secondly,* "The unrighteous man his thoughts;" *thirdly,* "Let him return to the Lord." Under the word *way* he includes the whole course of life, and accordingly demands

[1] "Par une obstination mechante."

that they bring forth the fruits of righteousness as witnesses of their newness of life. By adding the word *thoughts* he intimates that we must not only correct outward actions, but must begin with the heart; for although in the opinion of men we appear to change our manner of life for the better, yet we shall have made little proficiency if the heart be not changed.

Thus repentance embraces a change of the whole man; for in man we view inclinations, purposes, and then works. The works of men are visible, but the root within is concealed. This must first be changed, that it may afterwards yield fruitful works. We must first wash away from the mind all uncleanness, and conquer wicked inclinations, that outward testimonies may afterwards be added. And if any man boast that he has been changed, and yet live as he was wont to do, it will be vain-boasting; for both are requisite, conversion of the heart, and change of life.

Besides, God does not command us to return to him before he has applied a remedy to revolt; for hypocrites will willingly endure that we praise what is good and right, provided that they be at liberty to crouch amidst their filth. But we can have nothing to do with God if we do not withdraw from ourselves, especially when we have been alienated by wicked variance; and therefore self-denial goes before, that it may lead us to God.

And he will have mercy on him. We ought carefully to examine this context, for he shews that men cannot be led to repentance in any other way than by holding out assurance of pardon. Whoever, then, inculcates the doctrine of repentance, without mentioning the mercy of God and reconciliation through free grace, labours to no purpose; just as the Popish doctors imagine that they have discharged their duty well when they have dwelt largely on this point, and yet do but chatter and trifle about the doctrine of repentance. But although they taught the true method of repenting, yet it would be of little avail, seeing that they leave out the foundation of freely-bestowed pardon, by which alone consciences can be pacified. And indeed, as we have formerly said, a sinner will always shrink from the presence of

God so long as he is dragged to his judgment-seat to give an account of his life, and will never be subdued to fear and obedience till his heart is brought into a state of peace.

For he aboundeth in pardoning. Now, because it is difficult to remove terror from trembling minds, Isaiah draws an argument from the nature of God, that he will be ready to pardon and to be reconciled. Thus the Holy Spirit dwells on this part of doctrine, because we always doubt whether or not God is willing to pardon us; for, although we entertain some thoughts of his mercy, yet we do not venture fully to believe that it belongs to us. It is not without reason, therefore, that this clause is added, that we may not be hindered by uncertainty or doubt as to his infinite compassion toward us.

8. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts.* This passage is expounded in various ways. Some think that it condemns universally the life of men, that they may not be satisfied with it or flatter their vices; for we cannot approach to God but by taking away a false conviction of our own righteousness. And indeed none call for physicians but those who are driven by the violence of disease to seek both health and remedies. Accordingly, this passage is compared by them to that saying of our Lord, "What ranks high among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke xvi. 15.)

But the Prophet's meaning, I think, is different, and is more correctly explained, according to my judgment, by other commentators, who think that he draws a distinction between God's disposition and man's disposition. Men are wont to judge and measure God from themselves; for their hearts are moved by angry passions, and are very difficult to be appeased; and therefore they think that they cannot be reconciled to God, when they have once offended him. But the Lord shews that he is far from resembling men. As if he had said, "I am not a mortal man, that I should shew myself to be harsh and irreconcilable to you.[1] My thoughts are very different from yours. If you are implacable, and can with difficulty be brought back to a state of friendship

[1] "Pour vous estre rude et ennemi à jamais." "So as to be harsh and an enemy to you for ever."

with those from whom you have received an injury, I am not like you, that I should treat you so cruelly."

9. *For as the heavens are higher than the earth.* This agrees well with that passage in which David, describing the mercy of God, says, (Ps. ciii. 11,) that it is as much more excellent "as the heavens are higher than the earth;" for although the application is different, yet the meaning is the same. In short, God is infinitely compassionate and infinitely ready to forgive; so that it ought to be ascribed exclusively to our unbelief, if we do not obtain pardon from him.[1]

There is nothing that troubles our consciences more than when we think that God is like ourselves; for the consequence is, that we do not venture to approach to him, and flee from him as an enemy, and are never at rest. But they who measure God by themselves as a standard form a false idea and altogether contrary to his nature; and indeed they cannot do him a greater injury than this. Are men, who are corrupted and debased by sinful desires, not ashamed to compare God's lofty and uncorrupted nature with their own, and to confine what is infinite within those narrow limits by which they feel themselves to be wretchedly restrained? In what prison could any of us be more straitly shut up than in our own unbelief?

This appears to me to be the plain and simple meaning of the Prophet. And yet I do not deny that he alludes, at the same time, to the life of men such as he formerly described it to be. In a word, he means that men must forget themselves, when they wish to be converted to God, and that no obstacle can be greater or more destructive than when we

[1] "Do not think," saith God, "that what I promise is difficult, and let it not seem incredible to you, that a wicked and unjust man, or the people of the Jews, or all who among the Gentiles knew not God, can be saved. Consider this, that there is a wide difference between your purposes and mine, and that the difference of will is as great as the difference of nature; for there are many thoughts in the heart of a man, but the purpose of the Lord endureth for ever. You, like men who often repent of what they have promised, have thrown down the ancient will, and have set up in its place a modern will. But the thoughts of his heart are from generation to generation, and whatever he hath decreed cannot be changed."—*Jerome.*

think that God is irreconcilable. We must therefore root out of our minds this false imagination.

Moreover, we learn from it how widely they err who abuse the mercy of God, so as to draw from it greater encouragement to sin. The Prophet reasons thus, "Repent, forsake your ways; for the mercy of God is infinite." When men despair or doubt as to obtaining pardon, they usually become more hardened and obstinate; but when they feel that God is merciful, this draws and converts them. It follows, therefore, that they who do not cease to live wickedly, and who are not changed in heart, have no share in this mercy.

10. *Surely, as the rain cometh down.* After having spoken of God's tender affection and inconceivable forbearance towards us, he again brings forward the promises, that, by relying on them, we may banish all doubt of being free from every danger. It would be of little avail to speak to us about the nature or the secret purpose of God, if we were not reminded of "the word," by which he reveals himself. Now, God speaks openly to us, so that it is unnecessary to make longer inquiry. We must therefore come to the word, in which his will is declared without obscurity, provided that all our senses are confined within those limits; for otherwise we remain in suspense, and doubt what he has determined concerning us, even though the Lord declare a thousand times that he is altogether unlike men; for, although men acknowledge this, yet they wish to be certain about themselves and their salvation.[1] For this reason we ought carefully to observe the order which is followed by the Prophet. Thus also Moses recalled the people to the knowledge of God. "Say not thou, Who shall ascend to heaven? or, Who shall descend into the deep? The word is nigh, in thy mouth and in thy heart." (Deut. xxx. 12.) "That is," saith Paul, "the word of faith which we preach." (Rom. x. 8.)

He employs a comparison drawn from daily experience

1 "Lesquels desirent (s'ils veulent dire la verité) estre certains de leur salut, et que ce qu'ils deviendront." "Who desire (if they are willing to tell the truth) to be certain about their salvation, and what shall become of them."

and wonderfully appropriate; for, if we see great efficacy in the rain, which waters and fertilizes the earth, much greater efficacy will God display in his word. The rain is transitory and liable to corruption; but the word is eternal, unchangeable, and incorruptible, and cannot, like the rain, vanish away.

That we may more fully understand the Prophet's words, we must keep in view the end at which he aims. Men doubt if God will actually perform what he promises in his word; for we look upon the word, as if it were suspended in the air and had no effect. How shocking this is, he demonstrates from the very course of nature; for it is in the highest degree unreasonable to ascribe less to the word than to a dumb creature; and therefore he teaches us, that his word never fails of its effect. Some understand this to mean that the preaching of the Gospel is never unprofitable, but always produces some fruit. This is true in itself; for the Lord worketh by his Spirit, and "giveth increase," (1 Cor. iii. 7,) so that the labour of his servants is not unproductive. But the Prophet's meaning was different; namely, that God does not speak in vain or scatter his promises into the air, but that we shall actually receive the fruit of them, provided that we do not prevent it by our unbelief.

But watereth the earth, and causeth it to bring forth. He mentions two effects produced by the watering of the rain, which fertilizes the earth; first, that men have abundance of food for their support; and secondly, that they have seed for procuring a crop in the following year. If therefore in things of a transitory nature the power of God is so great, what must we think of the word?[1]

[1] "These words depend on what goes before, and their meaning may thus be briefly stated. Let not the people refuse to believe that a wicked man, after having committed great crimes, shall suddenly be saved. For my thoughts are not as the thoughts of men; and as far as heaven is distant from the earth, so far are my thoughts separated from the thoughts of men. I am most merciful and ready to forgive. Would you wish to have another metaphor? As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return thither, but water and refresh the earth, and cause it to bring forth various productions, that the corn-fields may produce abundance of bread for the use of men; so the word of my promise, which I have promised once and again, and which hath gone out of my mouth, shall not be void, but all shall be actually fulfilled."—*Jerome.*

11. *So shall my word be.* The word *goeth out of the mouth* of God in such a manner that it likewise "goeth out of the mouth" of men; for God does not speak openly from heaven, but employs men as his instruments, that by their agency he may make known his will. But the authority of the promises is more fully confirmed, when we are told that they proceed from the sacred mouth of God. Although, therefore, he brings forward witnesses from the earth, he declares that all that they have promised shall be ratified and sure; and, in order to impress more deeply on the minds of men the power and efficacy of preaching, he declares that he does not cast that precious seed at random, but appoints it for a fixed purpose, and consequently that we ought to entertain no doubt as to the effect; for there is nothing to which mortals are more prone than to judge of God from themselves so as to withhold belief from his voice.

This doctrine must be frequently repeated and inculcated, that we may know that God will do what he hath once spoken. For this reason, when we hear the promises of God, we ought to consider what is his design in them; so that, when he promises the free pardon of our sins, we may be fully assured that we are reconciled through Christ. But, as the word of God is efficacious for the salvation of believers, so it is abundantly efficacious for condemning the wicked; as Christ also teacheth, "The word which I have spoken, that shall judge him at the last day."

12. *Therefore ye shall go out with joy.* The Prophet concludes the subject of this chapter; for, when he spoke of the mercy of God, his object was, to convince the Jews that the Lord would deliver them. He now applies to his purpose what was contained in his discourse concerning the infinite goodness of God, and shews that his thoughts are very unlike the thoughts of men. And the true way of teaching is this, that we should apply general statements for present use. Finally, he treats of the restoration of the people, which depended on the undeserved mercy of God.

The mountains and hills shall break out before you. By "the mountains and hills" he means that everything which they shall meet in the journey, though in other respects it

be injurious, shall aid those who shall return to Jerusalem. They are metaphors, by which he shews that all the creatures bow to the will of God, and rejoice and lend their aid to carry on his work. He alludes to the deliverance from Egypt, (Ex. xiv. 22,) as is customary with the Prophets; for thus is it described by the Psalmist, "The mountains leaped like rams, and the hills like lambs. What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest, and Jordan, (Josh. iii. 16,) that thou wast driven back?" (Ps. cxiv. 4, 5.) For the restoration of the Church may be regarded as a renovation of the whole world, and in consequence of this, heaven and earth are said to be changed, as if their order were reversed. But all this depended on former predictions, by which they had received a promise of their return.

13. *Instead of the bramble*[1] *shall come up the fir-tree.* He still extols the power of God, which would be visible in the restoration of the people; for he shews that the change will be such that they shall have an easy road to return. Some explain it allegorically, and suppose that by "brambles" are meant men who wish to do injury, and who inflict wounds on others, and that these shall be "fir-trees," that is, trees that bear fruit and that are useful to their neighbours; but in expositions of that kind ingenuity is carried to excess. When they say that these things relate to the kingdom of Christ, and on that account ought to be understood in a spiritual sense, I agree with them; for the Prophet begins with the departure from Babylon, and includes the whole condition of the Church, till Christ was manifested to the world. But the propriety of that allegory must not therefore be admitted; for he speaks of the departure from Babylon, and, in order to open it up for his people, he says that he will remove every obstacle, and will supply them with everything necessary, so that they shall suffer no inconvenience. In like manner, when Christ promises the benefit of redemption, he likewise takes away everything that would injure or retard, and even turns those things to a different and totally opposite purpose, that from them also they may receive some benefit. All things (Rom. viii. 28) tend to the advantage of

[1] "Instead of the thorn."—Eng. Ver.

believers, and those things which would otherwise be injurious and destructive, are employed by God as remedies to purify them, that they may not be devoted to the world, but may become more ready and cheerful in the service of their Master.[1]

And shall be to Jehovah for a name. When he says that it shall be to God "for a name," he shews what is the design of the restoration of the Church. It is, that the name of God may be more illustrious among men, and that the remembrance of him may flourish and be maintained. On this account he adds that it shall be a perpetual sign, that is, a monument, and, as we commonly say, a memorial; and although, amidst these tempests, the Church be tossed and agitated in various ways, yet, because the Lord wishes that the remembrance of his name may be everlasting, he will guard and defend her.

CHAPTER LVI.

1. Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation *is* near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

2. Blessed *is* the man *that* doeth this, and the son of man *that* layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

3. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I *am* a dry tree.

4. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

5. Even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

1. Sic dicit Iehova: Custodite judicium, et facite justitiam; quoniam propinqua est salus mea, ut veniat: et justitia mea, ut reveletur.

2. Beatus homo qui fecerit hoc, et filius hominis qui hoc apprehenderit; custodiens sabbatum, ita ut non violet illud; et custodiens manum suam, ut ab omni malo abstineat.

3. Et ne dicat filius alienus aggregatus ad Iehovam, dicendo, Separando separavit me Iehova a populo suo; et ne dicat eunuchus, Ego sum lignum aridum.

4. Quoniam sic dicit Iehova, eunuchis qui custodiunt sabbata mea, et eligunt quæ mihi placent, atque apprehendunt fœdus meum;

5. Dabo eis in domo mea et intra muros meos locum, et nomen melius quam filiorum et filiarum; nomen perpetuum dabo eis, quod non delebitur.

[1] "Au service de leur maistre."

6. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

7. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices *shall be* accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

8. The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him, besides those that are gathered unto him.

9. All ye beasts of the field, come to devour; *yea*, all ye beasts in the forest.

10. His watchmen *are* blind: they are all ignorant, they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

11. Yea, *they are* greedy dogs *which* can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

12. Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, *and* much more abundant.

6. Filios, inquam, alieni, qui aggregati erant ad Iehovam, ut ministrent ei, et diligant nomen Iehovæ; ut sint illi in servos, quisquis custodierit sabbatum, ita ut non profanet illud, et amplexus fuerit fœdus meum.

7. Hos adducam in montes sanctitatis meæ; et lætificabo eos in domo orationis meæ. Holocausta eorum et sacrificia grata erunt in altari meo; quoniam domus mea Domus orationis vocabitur cunctis populis.

8. Dicit Dominus Iehova, qui congregat expulsos Israel: Adhuc congregabo super eum congregatos ejus.

9. Omnes bestiæ agri, venite ad devorandum, omnes bestiæ sylvestres.

10. Speculatores ejus cæci, omnes nescierunt, omnes canes muti, nesciunt latrare, jacentes dormiunt, amant dormitationem.

11. Et canes illi anima fortes nesciunt saturitatem; pastores ipsi nesciunt, nec intelligunt; universi respiciunt ad vias suas; quisque ad commodum suum a fine ejus (*vel*, *suo*).

12. Venite, accipiam vinum, potabimus siceram; et erit sicut hodie, ita crastinus dies, vel major, excellentior multo.

1. *Thus saith Jehovah.* This is a remarkable passage, in which the Prophet shews what God demands from us, as soon as he holds out tokens of his favour, or promises that he will be ready to be reconciled to us, that our reconciliation may be secured. He demands from us such a conversion as shall change our minds and hearts, that they may forsake the world and rise towards heaven; and next he likewise calls for the fruits of repentance.

Keep ye judgment, and do righteousness. Under the names "judgment" and "righteousness," he includes all the duties which men owe to each other, and which consist not only in abstaining from doing wrong, but also in rendering assistance

to our neighbours. And this is the sum of the second table of the Law, in keeping which we give proof of our piety, if we have any. For this reason the prophets always draw our attention to that table; because by means of it our real character is better known, and true uprightness is ascertained; for hypocrites, as we have formerly seen,[1] often practise deceit by ceremonies.

For my salvation is near, and my righteousness. He assigns the reason, and at the same time points out the source and the cause why it is the duty of all to devote themselves to newness of life. It is because "the righteousness of the Lord approaches to us," that we, on our part, ought to draw near to him. The Lord calls himself "righteous," and declares that this is "his righteousness," not because he keeps it shut up in himself, but because he pours it out on men. In like manner he calls it "his salvation," by which he delivers men from destruction.

Although this discourse was addressed to the Jews, that, by sincere affection of heart, and by the practice of integrity, they might shew their gratitude to God their Redeemer, yet it refers to every one of us; for the whole world is ruined in itself, if it do not obtain salvation from God alone. We must therefore attend to this exhortation, which instructs us that the nearer we are to God, so much the more powerfully ought we to be excited to the practice of godliness. Hence also Paul admonishes believers,[2] "Cast away the works of darkness; put on the armour of light; for our salvation is nearer than we thought." (Rom. xiii. 11, 12.)

2. *Happy is the man that shall do this.* When he calls those persons "happy" who, having embraced this doctrine, devote themselves to walk uprightly, he indirectly leads us to conclude that many will be deaf or disobedient; but, lest their wickedness or indifference should retard the elect, he recommends the exhortation which he has given from the advantage which it yields. Thus, in order that believers may abandon all delay, he exclaims that they are

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, Vol. i. pp. 56, 67.
[2] "Admonneste les fideles."

"happy" to whom it hath been given[1] to possess such wisdom.

Keeping the Sabbath. We have said that the words "justice" and "judgment," in the preceding verse, include all the duties of the second table; but here he mentions the Sabbath, which belongs to the first table. I reply, as I have already mentioned briefly, that they who live inoffensively and justly with their neighbours, testify that they serve God; and therefore we need not wonder that the Prophet, after having glanced at the second table, mentions also the first; for both ought to be joined together. In a word, Isaiah declares that he who shall obey God by keeping his law perfectly shall be "happy;" for the salvation and the righteousness of God shall belong to him. Since, therefore, men wander at random amidst their contrivances, and adopt various methods of worshipping God, he shews that there is only one way, that is, when men endeavour to frame and regulate their life by the injunction of the Law; for otherwise they will weary themselves in vain by taking other roads. In short, this is a remarkable passage, shewing that nothing pleases God but keeping the Law.

If the question be put, "Can men obtain righteousness and salvation by their own works?" the reply will be easy; for the Lord does not offer salvation to us, as if he had been anticipated by our merits, (for, on the contrary, we are anticipated by him,) but offers himself freely to us, and only demands that we, on our part, draw near to him. Since therefore he willingly invites us, since he offers righteousness through free grace, we must make every effort not to be deprived of so great a benefit.

Again, because the Sabbath, as Moses declares, (Exod. xxxi. 13, 17,) and as Ezekiel (xx. 12) repeats, was the most important symbol of the worship of God, so by that figure of speech in which a part is taken for the whole, and which is called a *synecdoche*, the Sabbath includes all the exercises of religion. But we must view the Sabbath in connection with everything that attends it; for God does not rest satisfied with outward ceremony, or delight in our indolence, but

[1] "Ausquels la grace a esté faite." "To whom grace hath been given."

demands from us earnest self-denial, that we may be entirely devoted to his service.

So that he may not profane it. This clause is commonly rendered, "That he may not profane it;" and literally it runs thus, "From profaning it;" and therefore we have thought it proper to prefix the word "*so*" to the clause, "So that he may not profane it," in order to remove all ambiguity.

And keeping his hand, that he may abstain from all that is evil. He now adds another *synecdoche*, to describe the duties which men owe to each other. The amount of it is, that there is no other way of serving God aright but by sincere piety and a blameless life, as he has also included in these two parts the rule of leading a holy life. In a word, it is an exposition of true righteousness which is contained in the Law of the Lord, that we may acquiesce in it; for in vain do men seek any other road to perfection. Here also are thrown down all false worship and superstitions, and, finally, everything that is contrived by men in opposition to the word of God.

3. *And let not the son who is a foreigner*[1] *say.* The Prophet shews that this grace of God shall be such that even they who formerly were estranged from him, and against whom the door might be said to have been shut, may obtain a new condition, or may be perfectly restored. And he meets their complaint, that they may not say that they are rejected, or unworthy, or "foreigners," or excluded by any mark; for the Lord will remove every obstacle. This may refer both to Jews, who had been brought into a condition similar to that of foreign nations by a temporary rejection, and to the heathen nations themselves. For my own part, I willingly extend it to both, that it may agree with the prediction of Hosea, "I will call them my people who were not my people." (Hos. i. 10.)

[1] "The essential meaning of this verse is, that all external disabilities shall be abolished, whether personal or national. To express the latter, he makes use of the phrase נֵכָר בֶּן, (*běn nēkār*,) which strictly means not 'the son of the stranger,' as the common version has it, but 'the son of strangeness,' or 'of a strange country;' נֵכָר (*nēkār*) corresponding to the German *Fremde*, which has no equivalent in English."—*Alexander.*

Joined to Jehovah. When he says that they are "joined to God," he gives warning that this consolation belongs to those only who have followed God when he called them; for there are many "eunuchs" on whom God does not bestow his favour, and many "foreigners" who do not join themselves to the people of God. This promise is therefore limited to those who have been called and have obeyed.

By calling them "foreigners" and "eunuchs," he describes under both classes all who appear to be unworthy of being reckoned by God in the number of his people; for God had separated for himself a peculiar people, and had afterwards driven them out of his inheritance. The Gentiles were entirely shut out from his kingdom, as is sufficiently evident from the whole of Scripture. Paul says, "Ye were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now by Christ Jesus, ye who formerly were far off have been made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. ii. 12, 13.)

The Gentiles, therefore, might at first doubt whether or not the benefit of adoption, which was literally intended for the Jews, belonged to them. We see also how much the Apostles shrunk from it, when the Lord commanded them (Mark xvi. 15,) to "preach the Gospel through the whole world;" for they thought that the doctrine of salvation was profaned if it was communicated indiscriminately to Gentiles as well as to Jews. The same hesitation might harass the elect people, from the time that their banishment from the holy land became a sign of the rejection of them; and therefore the Prophet commands them to dismiss their doubts.

And let not the eunuch say. By the same figure of speech, in which a part is taken for the whole, he includes under this designation all who bore any mark of disgrace which kept them apart from the people of God; for "eunuchs," and those who had no children, appeared to be rejected by God and shut out from the promise which the Lord had made to Abraham, that "his seed should be as the stars of heaven, (Gen. xv. 5,) and as the sand of the sea." (Gen. xxii. 17.) In a word, he warns all men against looking at themselves, that they may fix their minds exclusively on

God's calling, and may thus imitate the faith of Abraham, (Gen. xv. 6,) who did not look at either his own decayed body or the barren womb of Sarah, so as through unbelief to dispute with himself about the power of God, but hoped above all hope. (Rom. iv. 18-20.) The Prophet addresses persons who were despised and reproached; for, as Peter says, "there is no respect of persons with God, but in every nation he who feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him." (Acts x. 34, 35.)

4. *For thus saith Jehovah.* Now follows a confirmation; for the sincere worshippers of God, who keep the sabbaths and follow the righteousness of the Law, though they be "eunuchs,"[1] or labour under any other obstruction, shall nevertheless have a place in the Church. He appears to annihilate in this manner all the external marks[2] in which alone the Jews gloried; for the high rank of the Church is not external, but spiritual; and although believers have no emblems of distinction in the eyes of the world, and are even despised and reproached, yet they rank high in the sight of God.

And choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant. With the "keeping of the Sabbath," he connects obedience and adherence to "the covenant;" and hence we may readily infer that, when he spoke hitherto about the Sabbath, he had in view not an idle ceremony but perfect holiness. At the same time, he again lays a restraint on the children of God, not to make even the smallest departure from the injunction of the Law; for they are permitted to "choose," not whatever they think fit, but that which God declares to be pleasing and acceptable to himself. Wherefore both hypocrisy and inconsiderate zeal are here condemned, when God not only contrasts his own commandments with the inventions of men, but enjoins them earnestly to "take hold of his covenant."

[1] "According to the Law, (Deut. xxiii. 1,) eunuchs could not be received into the Hebrew nation: so that their situation, in that respect, was the same as that of the foreigners who were formerly mentioned. Of what use (might such a person say) are those splendid promises to me, who cannot be admitted into the Jewish commonwealth?"—*Rosenmüller.*

[2] "Toutes les marques exterieures."

5. *I will give to them in my house.* Here we see that all men, however unworthy, may obtain admission into the kingdom of God. He alludes to Jerusalem, and to the temple in which the Lord placed a memorial of his name. No place was given in it to any but to the Jews alone; and they would have reckoned the temple to be polluted, if any of the Gentiles had entered into it. Hence also a serious insurrection arose against Paul for having brought into the temple uncircumcised persons. The Lord now admits, without distinction, those whom he previously forbade; and indeed he set aside this distinction, when we, who were the children of strangers, were brought by him into the temple, that is, into his Church, which is not confined, as formerly, within those narrow limits of Judea, but is extended through the whole world.

A place and a name. יָד (*yād*) is here put for *place*, as in many other passages. It might also be supposed to denote "authority," or "power;" for they shall be elevated to such dignity as to be accounted the children of God.

Better than of sons and of daughters. A question may arise, Does the Lord compare the Jews who were at that time in the Church, with the believers whom he shall afterwards place in their room; or, does he contrast the future condition of the people with their condition at that time? For it is certain that "the name" of the Gentiles is "better" than that of the Jews, who were "cut off on account of their unbelief;" and we have succeeded in their room, "as wild olives ingrafted into a good olive tree," as Paul says. (Rom. xi. 24.) The meaning might therefore be, that "eunuchs" and "foreigners" shall have "a better name" than children and domestics, who were regarded as God's heritage. But I choose rather to explain it in a different manner, namely, that the dignity of believers shall be higher under Christ than it was under the Law. The patriarchs had a very excellent "name," when they called upon God as their Father, and were joined in covenant with him; but the grace of God has been far more abundantly poured out upon us since the coming of Christ; and therefore we have obtained in him a far more excellent name.

A perpetual name. He calls this name "perpetual," because it is written in heaven, where it shall live and flourish throughout all ages. Wicked men wish to have their name made illustrious in this world, and labour to promote their reputation, that the remembrance of their name may last for ever; but it is fading and of short duration. But far different is this name; for it makes us heirs of the heavenly kingdom, so that in the presence of angels we are reckoned to be the children of God.

We might also interpret מִבָּנִים (*mibbānīm*) to mean, "than the name which is derived from children;"[1] for men, by having children, do in some respect perpetuate their own name. He promises that this name shall be far more excellent. But I prefer to follow the former exposition.

6. *The children of the foreigner, who shall be joined to Jehovah.* He repeats the same thing which he had formerly said, that God will open the doors of his temple to all men without distinction, so that there shall no longer be a distinction between the Jew and the Greek. He declares that those whom God brings into a state of friendship with himself by the word, which is the bond of our adoption, are "joined to God." This is "the betrothing in mercy and faithfulness" which is mentioned by Hosea. (Hos. ii. 19, 20.) Not only does he grant to them a temple in which they may adore him as the body of the people were wont to do, but he assigns to them a more honourable rank, *that they may minister to him;* that is, God acknowledges as priests or Levites those who were formerly heathens.

And that they may love the name of Jehovah. We must observe the end of the calling, which is here stated; for he says that they shall be God's ministers on condition that they love his name. Thus hypocrites are here excluded; for the calling joins two things together, that we serve God, and that our service be with a ready and cheerful disposition of mind. There can be no worship of God, if we do not will-

[1] "A place and name more excellent than that which comes from children."—*Doederlein.* "More excellent and longer lived than that name which the fathers of families procure for themselves by the succession of posterity."—*Rosenmüller.*

ingly and readily yield obedience. What is said about alms, that "God loveth a cheerful giver," (2 Cor. ix. 7,) ought to be applied to every part of life, that we render to God willing service.

Whosoever shall keep my Sabbath. He again mentions the Sabbath; and we have said that under this word is included the whole worship of God. In observing it the people overlooked that which was of the highest importance; for, by resting satisfied with outward ceremony, they neglected the truth, that is, reformation of life. The Lord enjoined them to rest in such a manner as to keep both their hands and their minds from all crime and wickedness.

And shall embrace my covenant. Here he describes the zeal and steadfastness of those who submit themselves to God and cleave to his word; and therefore, if we are joined to God by a covenant, we ought to hold by it constantly, and adhere firmly to sound doctrine, so that it may not be possible to withdraw or separate us from him in any manner.

7. *These will I bring.* By these modes of expression he describes what he had formerly stated, that foreigners who were formerly excluded from the Church of God, are called to it; so that henceforth the distinction between circumcision and uncircumcision shall be abolished. This cannot refer to proselytes, who were received into the number of God's people by circumcision, for that would have been nothing new or uncommon; but he testifies that the grace of God shall be diffused throughout the whole world; and this cannot be accomplished without uniting the Gentiles to the Jews so as to form one body, which happened when the difference between circumcision and uncircumcision was taken out of the way. There is therefore nothing now to prevent Gentiles from ministering to God, seeing that they have been called into the temple, that is, into the assembly of believers. Not only so, but we saw a little before, that the priesthood is removed from the tribe of Levi, not only to the whole body of the people, but even to foreigners.

How strongly the Jews abhor this sentiment is well known; for, although they read these words of the Prophet, yet they reckon it to be utterly monstrous that the Gentiles should

be called to this distinguished benefit of God which was especially intended for them. Yet the Prophet's meaning is so plain, that it cannot without the greatest impudence be called in question. He extols this grace from the fruit which it yields; for true and perfect happiness is, to be reconciled to God and to enjoy his favour. We know, indeed, that wicked men indulge excessively in mirth; but that mirth is turned into gnashing of teeth, because the curse of God rests upon it. But God fills the hearts of believers with the most delightful joy, not only by shewing that he is reconciled to them, but by the manifestation of his favour and kindness in their prosperity. Yet their highest joy is that which springs from "peace" of conscience, which Paul ascribes to "the kingdom of God," (Rom. xiv. 17,) and which we enjoy when we are reconciled to God by Christ. (Rom. v. 1.)

Their burnt-offerings and sacrifices shall be acceptable. He promises that their sacrifices shall be acceptable to him, because all have been called on this condition, that they shall offer themselves and all that they have to God. By the word "sacrifices," he means such spiritual worship of God as is enjoined in the Gospel; for the Prophet spoke in accordance with what was customary in his time, when the worship of God was wrapped up in a variety of ceremonies. But now, instead of sacrifices, we offer to God praises, thanksgivings, good works, and finally ourselves. When he declares that they shall be acceptable, let us not imagine that this arises from their own value or excellence, but from God's undeserved kindness; for he might justly reject them, if he looked at them in themselves. This ought to be a spur to excite in us a strong desire to worship God, when we see that our works, which are of no value, are accepted by God as if they had been pure sacrifices.

He adds, *On my altar;* because in no other manner could the sacrifices be acceptable to God than "on the altar," by which "they were sanctified." (Matt. xxiii. 19.) Thus all that we offer will be polluted, if it be not "sanctified" by Christ, who is our altar.

For my house shall be called a house of prayer. Formerly

the temple was appointed for the Jews alone, whom in an especial manner the Lord desired to call upon him; for, when Paul shews that the Jews have a superiority over the Gentiles, he says that λατρεία, that is, "the worship of God," is theirs. (Rom. ix. 4.) Thus by an extraordinary privilege, such as the rest of the nations were not permitted to enjoy, a temple was built among them. But now the distinction has been removed, and all men, to whatsoever nation or place they belong, are freely admitted into the temple, that is, into the house of God. This temple has been enlarged to such a degree, that it extends to every part of the whole world; for all nations have been called to the worship of God.

Here we have the manifest difference between the Law and the Gospel; for under the Law the true worship of God was observed by one nation only, for whose sake the temple was especially dedicated to him; but now all are freely admitted without distinction into the temple of God, that they may worship him purely in it, that is, everywhere. We must attend to the form of expression, which is customary and familiar to the Prophets, who employ, as we have already said, figures that correspond to their own age, and, under the name of "Sacrifices" and of "the Temple," describe the pure worship of God. He paints the spiritual kingdom of Christ, under which we may everywhere "lift up pure hands," (1 Tim. ii. 8,) and call upon God; and, as Christ saith, God is not now to be adored in that temple, but "the true worshippers worship him in spirit and in truth." (John iv. 24.)

For this reason we see a fulfilment of this plain prophecy, namely, that "*to all peoples* the house of God hath become the house of prayer," that all may "call upon him, Abba, Father," (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6,) that is, in every language; that henceforth the Jews may not boast that they alone have God. Thus the prophets were under a necessity of accommodating their discourse to their own time, and to the ordinary services of religion, that they might be understood by all; for the time of full revelation was not yet come, but the worship of God was clothed with various figures. Yet undoubtedly the temple, which had been consecrated to the

name of God, was actually his house; for he testified by Moses that he would be in all places where he made mention of his name, (Ex. xx. 24;) and Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, said, "When they shall come to pray in this house, thou wilt hear in heaven, in thy habitation." (1 Kings viii. 30.) And accordingly Christ reproves the Jews for "turning his Father's house into a den of robbers," (Matt. xxi. 13; Mark xi. 17,) and connects this passage with a passage in the book of the Prophet Jeremiah. (vii. 11.)

Christ calls the temple "the house of prayer," with reference to that time when the Gospel had not yet been published; for although he was come, he was not yet known, and the ceremonies of the Law were not abolished. But when "the vail of the temple was rent," (Matt. xxvii. 51,) and pardon of sins was proclaimed, these applauses of the temple ceased along with other ceremonies; for God began to be everywhere called upon by "all peoples."

Yet it must here be observed that we are called into the Church, in order that we may call on God; for in vain do they boast who neglect prayer and true calling upon God, and yet hold a place in the Church. In whatever place we are, therefore, let us not neglect this exercise of faith; for we learn from the words of Isaiah, as it is also said, (Ps. l. 14,) that this is the highest and most excellent sacrifice which God demands; so that the holiness of the temple consists in prayers being there offered continually.

8. *The Lord Jehovah saith.* Isaiah again confirms what he formerly testified as to the restoration of the people; for although he extolled in lofty terms the grace of God, by which he would deliver his people, yet the condition of the Church was such that promises of this kind appeared to be ridiculous. Such repetitions, therefore, are not superfluous, but were necessarily added in order to strengthen feeble minds, that they might be fully convinced of that which was otherwise incredible.

Who gathereth the outcasts of Israel. It is with reference to the subject in hand that he bestows on God this title; for it belongs to him to gather a scattered church, and the same words, "he gathereth the outcasts of Israel," are used

elsewhere in the same sense. (Ps. cxlvii. 2.) Thus he promises that he will assemble them, and not them only, but that he will add to them various "peoples," that the Church may be very numerously increased and multiplied. Whenever therefore we are drawn by various calamities of the Church to doubt as to his gathering them together, we ought to interpose this shield: "It belongeth to the Lord to gather the dispersed of Israel; and, though they are widely dispersed and scattered, yet he will easily and perfectly restore them."

Still more will I gather upon him his gathered. I willingly keep by the literal meaning of the words of the Prophet. עָלָיו, (*gnăl,*) that is, "To," or "Upon;" for he appears to me to have in view what he had said in the former verse, that the temple would be opened to all peoples; and he means that he will yet add many others to the Jews who have been gathered. This actually happened; for not only did he gather the dispersed in Babylon, but he also gathered other dispersions, which were frequent and almost of daily occurrence. Nor has he ever ceased to gather; so that he has added a large mass to those who have been gathered.

9. *All ye beasts of the field.* This prediction appears to be at variance with what goes before; for what the Prophet has hitherto said was full of the most delightful consolation, but now he appears to threaten fiercely, and to predict frightful ruin. These statements might indeed appear to be contradictory; but, after having comforted believers, it ought not to be thought inconsistent if he forewarn them of a future calamity, that they might not lose courage when they saw everything near destruction, and that necessity might likewise prompt them to betake themselves more warmly and earnestly to the grace of God. There is also another reason, that hypocrites abuse the promises of God and hold them out under false pretences, cherish unfounded hope, and insolently boast of those things which do not at all belong to them; and therefore Isaiah intended to take from them the ground of false boasting.

And thus his design was twofold; first, that the hearts of believers might not be discouraged by various calamities,

which should bring them almost to utter destruction, and that even when, amidst prosperity and peace, they beheld by faith at a distance a future calamity, they might rest satisfied with this single consolation; and secondly, that he might strike hypocrites with dread and horror, so that they might not exalt themselves by vain confidence, or freely indulge their sinful inclinations under the pretence of these promises. For this reason God calls not men, but savage "beasts," that they might devour the people. He therefore forbids believers to be alarmed and tempted to unbelief, when these wild beasts shall be sent. And yet he intended also to strike terror into them, that he might arouse them to repentance, and to exhort them to seek the mercy of God, that the promises might not lose their value.

When he calls them "beasts *of the field*," he means beasts of every kind, and includes not only the Babylonians and Assyrians, but Antiochus, the Romans, and other enemies of the people, who brought various calamities upon them. But he has chiefly in view the defeat which they received from the Babylonians, who carried them away into wretched bondage.

10. *Her watchmen are blind.* He now assigns the reason why the people must be destroyed. It is because they are governed by wicked princes and pastors; not that he wishes to throw the blame on them alone, and thinks that the people are innocent, but because this was the beginning of the evil. We are not exempted from blame, if we follow blind guides, but, on the contrary, are justly punished for our transgressions; for the Lord takes away good guides from those whom he intends to punish for their ingratitude.

By the word "Watchmen"[1] he means not only the prophets, to whom was committed the office of teaching, but likewise judges, princes, and kings, who ought to have governed everything in a proper manner. He includes both

[1] "The prophets are called 'Watchmen,' (Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 2, 6, 7: Isa. lii. 8,) because it is their duty to see far, and to look out, and carefully to observe the evils, and the causes of the evils which may be pernicious to the people. The metaphor is drawn from guards or military sentinels, who, being placed on the watch-towers of fortified cities, carefully attend to everything that may bring mischief on the city."—*Rosenmüller.*

kinds of government, that of princes, and that of the ministers of the word, whom the Lord has placed, as the two eyes in the body, to govern the Church. Consequently, if they are wicked or unfaithful, there cannot arise a more destructive plague to a commonwealth.

All are ignorant. First, he reproaches them with want of knowledge ; for, as it is the chief excellence of a good shepherd to know his duty, that he may judge what is profitable and what is pernicious to the flock, and to watch laboriously, and to stand, as it were, on a watch-tower, that he may promote their safety in every respect, so nothing is more inconsistent with that office than ignorance and blindness. No man, therefore, will be a good shepherd, unless he understands the right method of governing the people. And hence we see what we ought to think of the idols of our time, who haughtily and insolently boast of the name of shepherds or pastors ; for they are untaught and ignorant beasts.

All are dumb dogs. By calling them, secondly, "dumb dogs," he charges them with slothfulness and indifference ; for, since it is the duty of a good shepherd to be industrious and careful, when he calls them slothful and indifferent, he shews that they had nothing about them that ought to belong to a shepherd. Thus, when we are deprived of good shepherds, and when lazy or even savage beasts come in their room, let us acknowledge God's wrath, and let us know that destruction is not far off; for the Prophet threatens and foretells the ruin of the people, when shepherds are "dumb."

Hence also it follows, that God appoints them to discharge the office of "dogs," that is, to keep watch, to drive away robbers and thieves, and not to permit them to enter into the fold. And if dogs are so faithful guardians and so warmly attached to their masters, that they continually watch for their safety, and do not cease to drive away, by *barking*, those from whom danger is apprehended, shepherds, when they give themselves up to sloth and drowsiness, ought to be ashamed of being surpassed by a brute beast.

11. *And those dogs strong of appetite.* The third vice which he remarks in wicked pastors is insatiable avarice. Though they are lazy in all that relates to good government,

yet they have a strong and ravenous appetite for food. Some view the Prophet's words as still more extensive, and as meaning that they rule tyrannically. Ezekiel expressly reproves them for this vice; for false prophets are commonly fierce, and act cruelly and barbarously towards the people of God. (Ezek. xxxiv. 4.) But if any person examine the matter carefully, he will perceive that the Prophet speaks of their insatiable avarice, which he afterwards describes by a variety of expressions.

They look to their ways. That is, "They attend eagerly to their own affairs; every person consults his own advantage." In short, he means that there is no man who does not wish to be preferred to others, as if every man had been born for himself.

Every one to his gain from his end.[1] מִקְצֵהוּ (*mikkātzēhū*) has received various expositions. Some render it, "In his end," that is, "In his affairs;" as if the reading had been, בְּקִצֵּהוּ, (*bĕkātzēhū.*) But this does not agree with the Prophet's meaning. Others render it, "From the end of his avarice." I think that a more simple interpretation is, "From his end," that is, "On his part;" or as we commonly say, (*Chacun en son endroict,*) "Every one in his place." Thus every one is bent on avarice, and draws and appropriates everything to himself, and consults his own advantage, without attending to the duties of his office.

Hence we learn, that no man can serve God who is given up to wicked desires; and he who shall labour to amass wealth, will not apply his mind to build up the Church of the Lord. No kind of blindness can be more dangerous than avarice; and so much the more ought it to be avoided by pastors, if they wish to be faithful servants of God. When we see the Prophet complaining of the bad pastors of his time, let us not be alarmed if we meet with the same thing in the present day, and let us not look upon

[1] "From his quarter." (Eng. Ver.) "Heb. 'His extremity,' his quarter, be it ever so remote; that is, universally."—*Stock.* "Literally, 'From his extremity.' Jerome correctly renders it, 'From first to last,' that is, without any exception; and that is the meaning which the word bears in Gen. xix. 4; xlvii. 2; Ezek. xxxiii. 2."—*Rosenmüller.* "All to a man."—*Doederlein.*

it as an unusual occurrence that so few are earnestly employed in the work of the Lord.

12. *Come ye, I will fetch wine.* After having spoken of the avarice and carelessness of pastors, he points out their desperate wickedness and obstinacy; for he represents them as speaking,[1] and brings forward their hard-hearted speeches, from which it is evident that they could not be brought back to the right path by any admonitions or threatenings, but fearlessly despised them all. In another passage the Prophet quoted the words of scorners, who, when the servants of God exhorted them to sackcloth and ashes, invited each other to feasting and drinking. "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die." (Isaiah xxii. 13.) Why do those prophets annoy us? It will never fare well with us, if we give ear to them. (Isaiah xxviii. 15.) A similar complaint is here repeated by Isaiah, that the pastors held out obstinately and seared themselves against the judgments of God.

Nor does he merely reprove them for drinking *wine and strong drink*, which in itself is not sinful, but for that mental drunkenness and brutality by which men haughtily and insolently despise the word of God. In other passages drunkenness and the abuse of wine are condemned; but here the Prophet exclaims against the madness and insolence with which pastors exalted themselves against God, and trampled under foot all threatenings, warnings, reproofs, and, in short, all religion. Yet there can be no doubt that he reproves the gross and shameful wickedness of burying reflection, as if on purpose, by excess of wine and feasting, that no shame or fear, no reverence for God or men, might disturb their repose; as ungodly persons do all they can to stupify themselves by unlawful pleasures, that they may more daringly, and with less reserve, abandon themselves to wickedness.

It is a shocking and monstrous sight to behold such contempt of God and of religion, not in foreigners, not in the common people, but in governors and princes themselves, who ought to have instructed others by their example, in

[1] "Thus they spoke one to another."—*Jarchi.*

that sacred order which bore the image of Christ; for both kings and priests bore his likeness and image. How intolerable this pride is, by which men furiously oppose the word, is well known. We are ruined and undone, when this medicine, which is the last, is rejected by us; for we do not permit the Lord to lead us back into the right path.[1] For this reason he has threatened in another passage that "this wickedness shall not be expiated." (Isaiah xxii. 14.) Thus he rebukes the height of impiety; and it is of great importance for us to weigh carefully the words which follow—

As to-day, so to-morrow. That is, "If it is well with us to-day, it shall be well to-morrow. Let us not be miserable before the time."[2] He describes their aggravated guilt, in treating with mockery God's gentleness and forbearance, and assuring themselves that they would escape punishment, as if God were asleep or enjoyed luxurious ease in heaven, whenever he suspended his judgments. By such diabolical proverbs, do men, even in the present day, labour to soothe and even to fascinate their consciences, that they may more fully wallow in every kind of pleasures, and indulge in their iniquities and crimes. That we may not fall, therefore, under this terrible judgment of the Lord, let every one examine himself, and perceive at a distance the wrath of God, that it may not attack us suddenly and unprepared.

CHAPTER LVII.

1. The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth *it* to heart; and merciful men *are* taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil *to come*.

2. He shall enter into peace: they

1. Justus periit, et nemo est qui cor adjiciat. Viri misericordiæ colligantur, nec est qui animadvertat, quòd a facie mali colligatur justus.

2. Veniet pax, quiescent in cubi-

[1] "Au bon chemin."

[2] "Thus, in all probability, these drunken guardians of the people said, in derision of the prophets, who were continually threatening them with destruction. They tell us of imminent danger and strange calamities which hang over our heads. But mind them not. Let us cheer our hearts with wine, and drown the thoughts of such improbable chimeras. Let us take our pleasure to-day, and never doubt but to-morrow we shall be full as merry, and so on for many years."—*White.*

shall rest in their beds, *each one* walking *in* his uprightness.

3. But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore.

4. Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, *and* draw out the tongue? *are* ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood,

5. Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks?

6. Among the smooth *stones* of the stream *is* thy portion; they, they *are* thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meat-offering. Should I receive comfort in these?

7. Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

8. Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance; for thou hast discovered *thyself to another* than me, and art gone up: thou hast enlarged thy bed, and made thee *a covenant* with them; thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest *it*.

9. And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase *thyself even* unto hell.

10. Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; *yet* saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.

11. And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid *it* to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

12. I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

13. When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee: but the wind shall carry them all away;

libus suis, quisquis ambulat coram eo.

3. Et vos accedite huc, filii veneficæ, semen adulteri et meretricis.

4. Super quem oblectati estis? Super quo aperuistis os? Exeruistis linguam? Annon vos filii prævaricatores? Semen mendax?

5. Incalescentes in quercubus (*vel, cum diis*) sub omni arbore frondosa, immolantes pueros in convallibus, sub prominentiis riparum.

6. In politis lapidibus (*vel, in partibus torrentis*) vallis pars tua; ipsi, ipsi sors tua. Etiam ipsis fudisti libamen, obtulisti sacrificium; an super his oblectationem capiam (*vel, pœnitentia ducar*)?

7. Super montem excelsum et elevatum posuisti stratum tuum. Etiam illuc ascendisti ad immolandum victimam.

8. Post ostium et postem posuisti memoriale tuum; discooperta es a me; ascendisti, dilatasti lectum tuum, fecisti cum iis fœdus, dilexisti lectum eorum, loco quem vidisti.

9. Et profecta es ad regem cum oleo, multiplicasti pigmenta tua; misisti legatos tuos ad locum remotum, humiliata es usque ad inferos.

10. Fatigata es in multiplici itinere tuo; nec dixisti, Desperatum est. Invenisti vitam manus tuæ, ideo non doluisti.

11. Et quem reverita es, et timuisti, quòd mentita es, et mei non es recordata, nec posuisti super cor tuum? Annon quia ego dissimulavi, et a seculo ideo me non times?

12. Ego annuntiabo justitiam tuam et opera tua, nec proderunt tibi.

13. Dum clamaveris, liberent te collectitii tui. Atqui omnes tollet ventus, rapiet vanitas. Qui autem

vanity shall take *them:* but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

14. And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

15. For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place,* with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

16. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls *which* I have made.

17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.

18. I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.

19. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to *him that is* far off, and to *him that is* near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him.

20. But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21. *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

in me sperat hæreditate obtinebit terram, et possidebit montem sanctitatis meæ.

14. Et dicet, Sternite, sternite, complanate viam, tollite offendiculum e via populi mei.

15. Quoniam sic dixit excelsus et sublimis, habitans in perpetuitate, cui nomen Sanctus: Excelsum et sanctum incolo, et cum afflicto et qui humilis est spiritu, ut vivificem spiritum humilium, ut vivificem cor afflictorum.

16. Quia non in perpetuum litigabo, neque semper irascar. Nam spiritus a facie mea induetur (*vel latebit, aut deficiet;*) et flatus ego feci.

17. Propter iniquitatem cupiditatis ejus iratus fui, et percussi eum; abscondi me, et irascar; ipse autem aversus abiit in via cordis sui.

18. Vias ejus vidi, et sanabo eum, et ducam eum, reddens ei consolationes, et lugentibus ejus.

19. Creo fructum labiorum. Pax, pax, longinquis et propinquis, dicit Iehova, et sano eum.

20. Impii autem quasi mare dispulsum, quod quiescere non poterit; et projicient aquæ ejus cœnum et lutum.

21. Non est pax, dixit Deus meus, impiis.

1. *The righteous man hath perished.* Isaiah continues his subject; for, after having shewn how fearlessly hypocrites indulge in their luxuries, and with what impudence they despise the word of God, he likewise complains that they do not consider the works of God. We have been placed here, as in a spacious theatre, to behold the works of God; and there is no work of God so small that we ought to pass by it lightly, but all ought to be carefully and diligently observed.

And no man layeth it to heart. The Lord holds out as a

mirror this event of his providence, more remarkable than all others, that he takes away good and worthy men out of this life, when he determines to chastise his people severely. But no man considers it, or reflects that it is a token of approaching destruction, that God gathers them, and places them in safety from being distressed by prevailing afflictions. The general meaning is, that wicked men grievously deceive themselves by supposing that there is no greater happiness than to have life continued to a great age, and by thus pluming themselves on their superiority to the servants of God, who die early. Being attached to the world, they likewise harden themselves by this pretence, that, by nothing else than a manifestation of God's favour towards them, while others die, they continue to be safe and sound.

Men of mercy are gathered. If by "men of mercy" be meant kind or tender-hearted men, this description ought to be carefully studied, by which the Prophet shews what is the true righteousness of the children of God; for hypocrites reckon this to be of no value. But nothing is more acceptable to God than kindness, by which we give evidence of our righteousness, and manifest that our heart is free from all hypocrisy. Yet we may with equal propriety take the phrase "men of mercy" in a passive sense, as meaning those whom the Lord has embraced by his mercy; for it is a phrase of frequent occurrence in Hebrew writings. Nor will it be inappropriate to suppose that there is an implied contrast between the grace of God and the wicked and unfavourable judgments of men; for they are wont to look on those persons as condemned who are taken away in the flower of their age. But, since God, in many passages of Scripture, represents gentleness and kindness as a distinguishing mark of his children, this may be, as I have said, a definition of true righteousness.

Hence we see that the Lord, at that time, gathered many good men, whose death portended some dreadful calamity, and yet that the Jews paid no regard to such forewarnings, and even proceeded to more daring lengths of wickedness; for they thought that all went well with them, when they were the survivors of many excellent men. This doctrine is

highly appropriate to every age. It frequently happens that God takes good men out of this world, when he intends to punish severely the iniquities of the ungodly; for the Lord, having a peculiar regard to his own people, takes compassion upon them, and, as it were, snatches them from the burning, that even survivors may perceive in it the wrath of God. And yet this is not an invariable rule; for righteous men are frequently involved, along with the reprobate, in temporal punishments; but it is so frequent that it rarely happens otherwise.[1]

In our own times a remarkable instance of this was given in the death of Luther, who was snatched from the world a short time before that terrible calamity befell Germany, which he had foretold many years before, when he exclaimed loudly against that contempt of the Gospel, and that wickedness and licentiousness which everywhere prevailed. Frequently had he entreated the Lord to call him out of this life before he beheld that dreadful punishment, the anticipation of which filled him with trembling and horror. And he obtained it from the Lord. Soon after his death, lo, a sudden and unforeseen war sprang up, by which Germany was terribly afflicted, when nothing was farther from her thoughts than the dread of such a calamity.

Instances of this kind occur every day; and if men observed them, they would not so heedlessly flatter themselves and their vices. But I thought it right to take special notice of this event, both because it happened lately,[2] and because in so distinguished a preacher of the Gospel and prophet of God it must be more clearly seen. We ought, therefore, to consider diligently the works of the Lord, both

[1] "This is a beautiful sentiment, that God removes righteous and good men from a world unworthy of them, and takes them to himself, so that they are not stained by the offences of their time, or mingled with the prevailing corruption that universally devours, and do not consent to it, or connive at it, and thus expose themselves to similar judgments of God, which have been decreed and appointed for the ungodly. It has undoubtedly been remarked by the wise in every age, that the sudden death of good and judicious men is a clear indication of the approaching ruin of a state."—*Vitringa.*

[2] "Pource que c'est une chose avenue depuis peu d'annees." "Because it is an event that happened but a few years ago."

in the life and in the death of "the righteous," but especially in their death, by which the Lord calls them away to a better life, that they may be rescued from those afflictions in which the wicked must be plunged.

2. *Peace shall come.* The Prophet describes what shall be the condition of believers in death; for the wicked, who think that there is no life but the present, imagine that good men have perished; because in death they see nothing but ruin. For this reason he says that "Peace shall come," which is more desirable than a thousand lives full of trouble; as if he compared them to discharged soldiers, who are and allowed to enjoy ease and quietness.

They shall rest in their beds. He adds the metaphor of sleep, in order to shew that they shall be absolutely free from all the uneasiness of cares, just as if they were safely pleasantly asleep "on their beds."

Whosoever walketh before him.[1] I do not think that the verb "walketh" is connected with שָׁלוֹם, (*shalom,*) "peace," as some do, who suppose the meaning to be this, that peace shall go before believers, so as to be, as it were, the guide of their life. But I am of opinion that believers, on the contrary, are described by it; as if he had said, "Whosoever walketh before God shall enjoy peace." Thus, when righteous men die, and their various labours are finished, and their course is ended, they are called to peace and repose. They "rest in their beds," because they do not yet enjoy perfect blessedness and glory; but they wait for the last day of the resurrection, when everything shall be perfectly restored; and that, I think, is what Isaiah meant.

It will be said, "Do not righteous men enjoy this peace while they live?" for the fruit of faith is, that "in patience we may possess our souls." (Luke xxi. 19.) Although faith produces peace in our hearts, (Rom. v. 3,) yet we are tossed about by various storms and tempests; and

[1] "Walking in his uprightness, or, before him." (Eng. Ver.) "The phrase denotes, 'One who walks straight before him,' so as to follow constantly the rule, not turning aside from it to the right hand or the left, and observing and keeping the straight line and road towards the end or mark which the Lord has held out to them, according to the example of the Apostle. (Philip. iii. 14.)"—*Vitringa.*

never in life are we so calm and peaceful as when the Lord takes us to himself. Peaceful and calm, therefore, is the death of the righteous, (Psalm cxvi. 15,) for it is "precious in the sight of God;" but stormy is the death of the wicked.[1] Hence also we may learn that souls are immortal; for if souls had no feeling, (as some fanatics have dreamed,) they could not enjoy "peace." Thus they enjoy peace and repose, because they live in Christ.

3. *And draw near, ye sons of the sorceress.* After having spoken of the happy and peaceful death of good men, he breaks out with very great vehemence against the wicked, who did not cease to lead a base and shameful life, and were not moved by the death of believers. As he had said that good men enjoy peace, so he threatens that the wicked shall have ceaseless war. He taught that to the holy servants of God death shall even be like a hiding-place, to shelter them from the whirlwind, and storm, and other tempests, that he might threaten the worst of evils against the obstinate despisers of God. Here we ought to observe the contrast between good men who walk before God, and the wicked, who cease not rebelliously to resist God. The former shall enjoy peace when they die; the latter shall have no peace during life, and shall feel dreadful torments in death.

He orders them to come forth to the judgment-seat of God, which they hope that they will be able to escape by their disguises; and therefore he affirms that they gain nothing by their refusal, for they shall be dragged against their will. The more hardened they were, the sharper were the excitements that must be applied to them; and therefore the harshness of the Prophet could not be excessive, either in arousing their stupidity, or in casting down their pride. And indeed it is well known how insolent was the vanity of the Jews on account of their genealogy; for which reason the prophets frequently beat down their haughtiness and pride, and affirmed that they were not the children of Abraham, because they were bastards and traitors.

On this account Isaiah calls them "the seed of the adul-

[1] "Mais celle des meschans est effroyable." "But that of the wicked is frightful."

terous and the whore." In like manner Ezekiel reproaches them, "Thy father is an Amorite; thy mother a Hittite." (Ezek. xvi. 3.) Similar forms of expression are found in many parts of Scripture. Thus he beats down their intolerable hardihood, and drags them forward unwillingly and reluctantly, that they might not think that they could escape the judgment-seat of God.

4. *On whom have ye made sport?* The Prophet shews that there is no reason why the Jews should boast so proudly on the pretence of their birth, seeing that they mocked at God and the prophets. They thought that they had to deal with men, when they rejected the word; as we see that wicked men in the present day, while they fearlessly despise the doctrine of God and laugh at ministers, nevertheless shelter themselves, and falsely glory in the name of God. This is the reason why the Prophet bears hard upon them and censures with severity.

On whom have ye opened the mouth? The meaning of the words is, "When ye put forth the tongue against God, and mock his word, do ye think that ye have to deal with a mortal man?" The question ("On whom?") means that they resorted to disguises and concealments, in order to conceal their impiety; for wicked men do not confess that they are rebels against God, and even complain that they are very unjustly treated. But they must be dragged to the light and convicted of their wickedness; for if there be a God in heaven, they carry on war with him, by attacking and rejecting his word and treating it as a fable.

To "open the mouth" and to "put forth the tongue" mean the same thing, except that by these expressions he has more fully described their wickedness, in not only rejecting God, but also mocking him. The inward contempt of the heart had driven them to open jeers and blasphemies, so that they were not moved by any fear of disgrace.

Seed of the adulterer and the whore. At length he concludes that they are treacherous children, a lying seed, and that he has justly reproached them with being "the children of the whore;" for such contempt of God could not be found in the children of Abraham. Hence we learn in

what manner wicked men ought to be treated, and with what severity they ought to be reproved, that they may not flatter themselves; and the more they despise everything that is held out in the name of God, the more ought their sacrilegious wickedness to be exposed and dragged forth to public view.

5. *Inflaming yourselves.* Others render it, "Taking delight" or "consolation;" but the Prophet makes use of a metaphor which is often found in Scripture, and which is exceedingly adapted to the present subject; for the Lord compares the ardour by which idolaters are hurried along to the love of a harlot, by which poor wretched men are inflamed so as to be transported with blind eagerness. (Jer. iii. 1; Hos. ii. 2; iv. 15.) Idolaters have no moderation, and do not permit themselves to be reclaimed from their madness by any arguments. In the sight of God idolatry is a very base kind of fornication.

Under the oaks, or, *with the gods.* Some translate אֵלִים, (*ēlīm,*) "gods," and others "oaks."[1] I leave every one at liberty to adopt either reading; for the meaning will always be the same, and commentators are agreed that the Prophet condemns idolatry. I do not dispute, therefore, about the reading; though it is probable that the same thing is twice repeated, in accordance with the practice of Hebrew writers, in a particular and in a general form, and yet that the Prophet, by means of an ambiguous word, alludes to "the gods."

Sacrificing children. Here he bears still harder on the Jews, and shews that they are not the true seed of Abraham; seeing that they pollute themselves with superstitions of every kind. In consequence of the delight which the Jews took in such practices, he exposes their vileness. "You shelter yourselves, indeed, under the name of religion, but I declare that you commit fornication with idols." In this manner it was proper to expose and freely to point out that wickedness which base and malicious men endeavour to cloak under various pretences; and thus the Prophet boldly discharges his duty by summoning men to the judgment-

[1] See Commentary on Isaiah, Vol. i. p. 84, *n.* 1.

seat of God, and holding them to be guilty, though they wish to take every method of excusing themselves. He shews that they are treacherous, and have departed from the law of God by abominable idolatry, and mentions one kind of shocking and even accursed and monstrous worship; namely, the "sacrificing of children," from which it is very evident how powerful is the spirit of error, when men have once turned aside from God. Satan seizes their minds (2 Thess. ii. 9) in such a manner that he drives them altogether to madness and rage. They who do not hesitate to slay their children, as if on the ground of its being a righteous sacrifice, must be in a state of furious madness.

And yet those cruel murderers of their children did not want some pretence; for they cloaked their crime under the example of Abraham, who did not spare (Gen. xxii. 16) his only-begotten son; and the ancient Hebrew writers pronounce it to have been (κακοζηλία) a wicked imitation "If we are Abraham's descendants, we ought not to spare our children." But Abraham did this (Gen. xxii. 2) by the command of God; while they did it of their own accord, and without God's command. It was an extraordinary example, by which the Lord intended to try and attest Abraham's faith. Besides, Isaac was not sacrificed; for the Lord was satisfied with Abraham's cheerful and ready will. (Gen. xxii. 12.) They slew their children. It was, therefore, a perverse and damnable imitation, for they differed widely from their father. This should be carefully observed; for a large portion of superstitions has proceeded from this source of (κακοζηλία) wicked imitation. Men have rashly and without discrimination seized on everything that was done by the fathers.

6. *Amidst polished stones,* or, *in parts of the valley.* He continues the same subject, and reproves in various ways the superstitions which abounded in Judea; for no place was altogether free from idolatry. There were no rocks, no rivers, no valleys, no corner whatever, in which they had not erected a monument of their superstition. They had their groves and mountains, in which they sacrificed after the manner of the Gentiles.

Whether we here adopt the reading, "Polished stones," or "Parts of the river," the meaning will be the same. The Prophet means that the Jews chose their own method of worshipping God, and turned aside from the rule which he had laid down in his Law; and consequently that every kind of worship which they followed by their own choice was abominable and wicked; for in religion and in the worship of God it is only to the voice of God that we ought to listen. If it be thought preferable to render it "polished stones," then Isaiah rebukes the contempt of the Law by which God forbade the use of hammers, (Ex. xx. 25,) in hewing or chiselling the stones to be employed in building the altar; for he did not wish that sacrifices should be offered on any but one altar. But as it was customary with the Gentiles to dedicate temples near fountains and rivers, the other meaning will be equally appropriate.

They, they are thy lot. The repetition of "they, they" is highly emphatic. A word may be supplied by way of permission, as if the Lord permitted the Jews to abide by their practices, since they had forsaken him and preferred idols and false worship; as it is said, "Go, sacrifice to idols." (Ezek. xx. 39.) I am disposed to favour this reading; as if he had said, "I leave to you your inventions, and willingly permit you to be entirely devoted to them, and relinquish my right; for I have nothing to do with traitors and apostates." And yet he undoubtedly alludes to that passage in the writings of Moses, by whose mouth God said that he would be the inheritance of his people, so that they ought to be satisfied with having him alone. (Numb. xviii. 20.) This was also followed by David, who says, "The Lord is my portion, my inheritance." (Ps. xvi. 5.) Since, therefore, the Jews had revolted from God, and had followed idols, the Lord justly commanded them to keep the idols to themselves, and intimated that he would have nothing in common with them.

Even to them hast thou poured a drink-offering. He proceeds in enumerating superstitions, and confirms the statement that he has been rejected and cast off by them; for they alienated to false gods what he wished to belong to himself alone. The Jews might have replied to every word

of the Prophet, that they had no other intention than to worship God. But the Prophet pays no regard to such idle and frivolous pretences; for the wrath of God is provoked by false worship, and is the more inflamed by it in proportion as it is more constant and longer continued. Hence we learn what sobriety we ought to observe in the worship of God, that we may depend on his word alone; for whosoever shall swerve from it in the smallest degree, will not only lose his labour, but will kindle the wrath of God, whose majesty he wickedly insults and does all that is in his power to lessen.

Shall I take pleasure in these things? It might also be translated, "Shall I repent?" This interpretation has been most generally adopted, because he wishes to assign a reason why he punishes the people. As if he had said, "When I take vengeance for these transgressions, is it possible that I shall repent?" Yet the interpretation which I have followed appears to me preferable, "Shall I take delight, or consolation, from those sacrifices which thou hast offered to me?" For idolaters commonly take delight in their own inventions, and imagine that God also is delighted with everything that they pursue with mad and furious eagerness. Nor is such a question superfluous; for men think that God is like themselves, and will approve of everything that is agreeable to them. On the contrary, he declares that nothing is approved by him, or is acceptable to him, but what agrees with his word.[1]

7. *Upon a lofty and high mountain.* He again repeats that metaphor at which we have formerly glanced. Superstitious persons commit fornication with their idols, because, by forsaking the simplicity of the word, they violate the bond of that holy marriage into which God has entered with them, and prostitute themselves to Satan. But now Isaiah intended to express something more; for, when he says that

[1] "Jehovah adds a question, 'Should I take consolation in these things?' Should I shake off from my mind, and bury in oblivion, my indignation which arises from your heinous crimes, so as to allow them to pass unpunished? The meaning has been accurately expressed by the Septuagint, ἐπὶ τούτοις οὖν οὐκ ἐργισθήσομαι; 'Shall I not be enraged on account of these things?' which has been followed by Jerome, 'Nunquid super his non indignabor?'"—*Rosenmüller.*

they set up their *bed* on a lofty place, he means that they are not at all ashamed of their shameful conduct. As a harlot, who has lost all shame, dreads not the sight of men, and cares not about her reputation, so they openly and shamefully committed fornication in a lofty and conspicuous place. He compares altars and groves to "beds" on which that accursed crime is committed, and he compares men who sacrifice on them to impudent and abandoned harlots. As to the opinion entertained by some, that this relates to the couches on which they reclined at their sacrificial feasts, there is no good foundation for it.

To offer a sacrifice. Here he describes without a figure that kind of fornication which he rebukes, namely, that they offered sacrifices to idols. They imagined, indeed, that in doing so they were rendering obedience to God; but the Lord rejects all that men contrive according to their own pleasure, and abhors that licentiousness.

8. *Behind the door.* He dwells largely on the crime of which we have already spoken, that the people may no longer flatter themselves in their inventions. It is probable that Isaiah alludes to the words of Moses, by which God commanded them to have the Law continually placed before them, to attach it to the posts of their houses, and to keep it written and wrapped around their arms and the fringes of their garments, that they might be constantly reminded of their duty. (Deut. vi. 9; xi. 20.) But the Jews, on the contrary, polluted the doors and posts of their houses by tokens of idolatry, and left no corner free or pure from such pollutions. Thus they came to forget everywhere God and the Law, and substituted in their room the excitements of their own lust.

Thou hast enlarged thy bed. He again repeats what he formerly said, and returns to that clause, that the Jews most basely commit fornication with idols when they think that they are worshipping God; because they do not follow the rule of the word. It is the same as if a woman, having forsaken her husband, should prostitute herself in a brothel, and freely receive all that came, as if the bed had been a large plain, and capable of containing a vast multitude.

For this reason he says that she was *detected by him*, because, having laid aside the modesty of the married state, she allowed herself to be dishonoured and ravished by others; for God holds the place of a husband, to whom she ought to have been subject, but she sought new husbands, and broke the bond of marriage. He describes their aggravated guilt, by saying that the Jews of their own accord devoted themselves to idols, as if a base woman ran after a man with blind eagerness.

Thou lovedst their bed in the place which thou sawest. By a different figure he accuses them of that hasty love, because, as if by a single glance, they were suddenly and eagerly hurried on to any place whatever. Yet he blames the rashness of men, who think that they are sagacious in worshipping God, and select places according to their own pleasure. But this sagacity is diabolical; for God commands us to keep our eyes fixed on himself and his word, so as to be closed against everything else.

9. *And thou wentest to the king with ointment.* Here the Prophet censures another vice closely allied to the former; for ungodliness begets various errors, and leads into grievous and intricate distresses those minds which are frivolous and destitute of the fear of God; for it is proper that they who refuse to rest on God should be tossed about, or rather driven up and down. He therefore reproaches the Jews with having laboured much and long in seeking the assistance of the wicked; that is, with having attempted to bring the Egyptians against the Assyrians, and next, when they had been disappointed of their hope, with having begun to betake themselves to the Babylonians. When their hearts have been estranged from God, they seek assistance from another quarter, and by great labour and expense bring upon themselves severer distresses. Yet while the Lord grants repose to his people, that they may perform their work in peace, wicked men "vex themselves in vain, rise early, go late to rest, eat the bread of sorrow," as it is said, (Ps. cxxvii. 2,) and yet do not gain a farthing, because all that they do is without God's authority or guidance. But the Spirit inflicts on them this punishment, so that they incessantly wander and

are tossed about in doubt and uncertainty, and never can find rest in their minds.

10. *Thou art wearied.* He means that men undertake superfluous and useless labours, when they do not follow God. They vex themselves in vain, as has been already said; for nothing that is attempted in opposition to God can ever be successful. Besides, he wittily ridicules the wicked practices of those who choose rather to waste themselves by incessant toil than to advance calmly wherever God calls them.

And hast not said, There is no hope; that is, "Although thou seest that thy labours are fruitless, yet thou obstinately perseverest and pursuest thy designs; whereas even fools, when they are unsuccessful, commonly repent." Men must therefore be obstinate and desperate, when an unhappy and unsuccessful issue of their schemes does not sometimes lead them to ask themselves, What are you doing? Jeremiah glances at this obstinacy, but in different words; for he says that the Jews were so fool-hardy as to say, "We are undone, yet we will follow our own thoughts. This has been determined by us, and our opinion cannot be changed." (Jer. xviii. 12.) But here he censures that stupidity which bewildered them so much that they could not acknowledge their folly and repent, and turn again to the right road.

Thou hast found the life of thine hand. "Life" is here supposed by some to mean "food;" as if the Prophet had said, "Thy labour was as delightful to thee as if thou wert gaining food for thyself by thy hand."[1] Others take "the life of the hand" to mean delight, or the highest pleasure; and both interpretations amount to the same thing.

But there is somewhat greater difficulty in the question, "Does he speak sincerely or ironically?" If the words be taken in the literal sense, the meaning will be, "Thou didst not grieve, because fortune appeared to favour thee for a time." When unbelievers succeed to their wish, they encourage themselves the more in their unbelief, and, as the common saying is, "Men are blinded by prosperity." But especially this happens when men have forsaken God, and

[1] "Comme si tu eusses gaigné ta vie en travaillant de tes mains." "As if thou hadst gained thy life by labouring with thy hands."

abide by their own ways and schemes; for then they fearlessly despise God. But they may also be viewed as ironical, "How comes it that thou dost not retrace thy steps and repent? Why dost thou not acknowledge thy folly? Is it because thou hast life in thy hand, and because everything goes prosperously with thee?"[1]

I prefer the latter interpretation, though I do not reject the former. It is plain enough from history that the Jews had no good reason for being proud of their prosperity or success; for the treaty into which they entered, first with the Egyptians, next with the Assyrians, and lastly with the Babylonians, was destructive and fatal to them; and they found by experience how rash they had been in calling allies to their aid; so that the Prophet justly taunts them with having found "the life of their hand." Thus he heightens his description of the foolishness of this people, who willingly rush forward to their own destruction, and obstinately bring down ruin on themselves, when they ought, at least, like fools, to have gained wisdom by the misery which they had experienced.

11. *And whom hast thou worshipped and feared?* Here he breaks out more vehemently against the Jews, because they were destitute of the fear of God, though they boasted of their holiness and sheltered themselves under an empty title of religion. Not only do hypocrites flatter themselves in their superstitions, but they are likewise regarded by the common people as holy and pious; and, therefore, they act haughtily and insolently towards God and men. But the Prophet declares that true fear of God cannot exist, where the worship is not pure and agreeable to his word. All the opinions entertained by men, as to the plausible forms of worship observed by superstitious persons, are absolute

[1] "Dathius thus translates the Hebrew text, 'Thou hast found thy life, therefore thou dost not feel thy disease,' and adds in a note, 'The phrase, (thy life,) is used ironically by the Prophet to denote idols, which brought destruction instead of life to the people. He calls them the life of the hand for this reason, that they employed all their industry in making them.' The simplest meaning appears to me to be, to take 'the life of the hand' as denoting either their strength or the supports of life procured by the hand; so that the meaning is, Still thou thinkest that by these thy labours thou wilt procure strength and assistance."—*Rosenmüller*.

wickedness and folly. He declares, therefore, that there is no fear of him and no religion among them, although they are greatly delighted with their masks.

What is more, by their religious ceremonies, as manifest proofs, they shew that they have no reverence or fear of God; for God testifies, by Moses, that he makes trial whether or not they love him with all their heart, when he permits superstition and idolatry to be introduced by the false prophets. (Deut. xiii. 3.) All that fly to them, therefore, shew that they are altogether destitute of the fear of God; for, if they considered that they must one day give an account to him, they would not so daringly trample under foot his commandments.

And hast not remembered me. When he complains of having been forgotten, he shews that it was through obstinate wickedness that they fought against God, and not through ignorance that they wandered from him; because, having a sure rule of leading a holy life, they willingly revolted from him, and broke the promise which they had made to him. We ought to consider diligently how dreadful is the thunder launched against hypocrites, who mock at all threatenings, and cover themselves by vain disguises, when he declares that they are destitute of the fear of God, and that they are liars and have forgotten him.

Is it not because I held my peace?[1] Here I have thought it right to insert the word "because," which needs to be supplied, in order to bring out more fully the Prophet's meaning; for those who do not supply some word subject themselves to a vast amount of trouble in bringing out an exposition; and we know how frequently this mode of expression is employed by the Hebrew writers. He reproaches the Jews with having abused God's forbearance and patience, by which their hearts ought rather to have been softened. But such is the wickedness of men, that it renders them bolder in transgression, and leads them to think that they may do what they please without being punished.

Accordingly, in the last clause of the verse I consider the particle ו (*vau*) to mean *therefore*. "And *therefore* thou

[1] "Have I not held my peace?"—(Eng. Ver.)

dost not fear me, because I held my peace, whereas thou oughtest rather to have been melted by my goodness." Hence we infer that the Jews could not complain of God's excessive severity, since he bore patiently with them for a long time, and they grew worse and worse in consequence of having been exempted from punishment. It was therefore necessary that he should assume a totally different character, and punish them more severely for their iniquities.

12. *I will declare thy righteousness.* The Prophet affirms that the Lord will no longer endure what he formerly endured, and that henceforth he must follow a different method. He calls it ironically "their righteousness;" for he means by it all the wickedness and all the errors by which they were stained and corrupted; as if he had said, "I will shew what is the nature of your righteousness." So long as God "holds his peace," they who are most unrighteous and most unholy appear to be "righteous" persons; but when the Lord ascends his judgment-seat, men are brought out of their lurking-places, and their baseness is dragged forth to public view. And so the Prophet means that the greatest wickedness passes in the world for "righteousness," so long as God holds his peace, but that it shall at length be scattered, when he ascends his judgment-seat; for men, after having much and long flattered themselves, shall at length feel that he is their judge.

And they shall not profit thee. This relates to the effect, by which men almost always judge; for they do not inquire whether a thing be righteous or unrighteous, but think that whatever is profitable to them ought to be approved. The Prophet therefore threatens that all the works from which they hoped to derive some profit shall be destructive to them.

13. *When thou shalt cry, let thy troops deliver thee.* He states more fully what he had slightly touched in the former verse, that, when they shall come to close quarters, they shall be ashamed; for the potential mood, "Let them deliver," amounts to saying, "They will not do it." He alludes to what he had formerly said, (ver. 9,) "Thou wentest to the

king with ointments." And accordingly he gives the name of "troops" to all the means of defence by which the Jews thought that they would be safe; for, by trusting to them, they abandoned themselves to every kind of vices, as if they should be certain of escaping punishment, because they were guarded and fortified on every side. But the Lord shews how unavailing are all the troops which are assembled without his authority.

"Cry" denotes here that calamity by which they were to be afflicted; for, relying on their treaties and on the aid of allies, they thought that they would enjoy profound peace, as if they had never at any former period been deceived. But he declares that all the military defences which they have collected for themselves shall be of no advantage to them whatever. Detestable and accursed is that confidence which men, having forsaken God, place in things of this world or in human defences. (Jer. xvii. 5.) Formerly he brought it as a reproach against the people, that they were not satisfied with the gentle waters of Shiloah, and desired to have the rapid and impetuous rivers which would at length overflow them. (Is. viii. 6.) This actually happened; for the Assyrians and Egyptians, and lastly the Babylonians, were not only unprofitable, but even ruinous, to the Jews whose allies they were.

But he who hopeth in me. Next follows a contrast, in which he invites them to confidence in God, which is the remedy that ought to be employed against all evils; as, on the other hand, all evils arise from unbelief and distrust. As to the promise of an inheritance to those who hope in God, it amounts to this,—"What else do you seek than to remain safe and sound, and to have your inheritance uninjured? It is I who can do this. For who brought you into this country? Who gave you possession of it? And yet you run after Egypt, and seek from men assistance which will be of little avail, and disregard my help."

Shall have the land by inheritance. I have no doubt that by the word "inheritance" he means Judea, in which the Jews were desirous to remain in safety; for he afterwards mentions the "*mountain* of his holiness," that is, the moun-

tain on which the temple was built. So, then, the Jews did not ascribe to the Lord that which belonged to him, when they fled, not to him, but to the Assyrians or Egyptians, for help. Hence we ought to draw a universal doctrine, namely, that our affairs will succeed admirably, if we hope in the Lord; and if we throw away confidence in him, we certainly need not wonder if we waver and are tossed about in various ways.

When he calls the mountain to which the Jews were to be brought back "*the mountain of holiness*," he means that life and all its comforts are not in themselves desirable, except that we may worship God; for the end of human life is this, that God may have a people who shall render to him purity of worship. Let our eyes, therefore, be always fixed on the worship and service of God, if we desire life, or deliverance, or any of the comforts of life.

14. *And he shall say, Prepare, prepare.* Because this promise, that they who hoped in the Lord should possess the land, might be thought ridiculous, (for soon afterwards they were to be driven out of it,) for the sake of believers that still remained, there is added this second promise, by which he pledges himself that, although they have been driven out of the land of Canaan, and banished to a distant country, yet they shall be brought back to it. He therefore meets a doubt which might arise, that good men might not despair during that painful and long-continued banishment, or imagine that the promise of God had failed of accomplishment. Some explain it to mean, that the Lord will send true and faithful prophets, to cleanse from its scandals the Church which had been corrupted by false prophets and wicked rulers; as he formerly shewed that from them arose the cause of her ruin; and so they think that this is a promise of a better and happier condition. But such an interpretation is excessively forced, and therefore I choose rather to adopt the former interpretation, that, although for a time the Jews shall be deprived of that land, yet they shall be restored to it by the Lord, who will order the roads to be levelled, in order to bring them back.

This passage agrees with that which we formerly examined,

(Is. xl. 1-4,) in which the Lord commanded to bring comfort to his people, to proclaim and publish the return to Judea, and to clear the roads; for, in consequence of their having been shut up in Babylon as in a grave, and of the length and difficulty of the journey, and of the vast wilderness that lay between, they could scarcely have any hope of returning to their native country. It was therefore proper that Isaiah should not pass by this matter lightly, that they might not dread the mountains or the sea that lay between, or any other obstructions.

Level the road. He addresses Cyrus and Darius, whose minds the Lord inspired to open up the path, and grant protection to the Jews; as if he had said, that the Lord will send ministers, who are now unknown to them, by whose agency he will "prepare the way" and bring out the people. The apostrophe, also, by which he directly addresses them, carries greater force than if he had spoken in the third person. By ordering them to *remove the stumblingblocks*, he shews that there is no reason why they should be terrified by the difficulties and obstructions of the roads, which the Lord will easily "take away," whenever he thinks fit.

Out of the way of my people. The hope of return is contained in this, that the Lord determines to bring back his people, and place them again in the land of Canaan. Wherefore, though there were no other road, yet there must be one, and every bar and obstacle must be removed; because the Lord hath promised their return, and consequently is their leader in the journey.

15. *For thus hath spoken the High and Lofty One.* He confirms the former statement about the restoration of the people from captivity. But this verse may be explained in two ways; either that the Prophet meets the doubt which might spring up in the hearts of good men, and thus compares things which are contrasted with each other; or, that he draws an argument from the nature of God, in order to strengthen weak minds. To explain these things more clearly, we know, first, that our hearts are often distracted by these thoughts, that God is actually in heaven, but that there is a great distance between him and us, and that he

overlooks or despises human affairs, and, in a word, that he takes no care at all about us. In order to correct this imagination, the Prophet says that God does indeed dwell in a lofty place, but does not the less on that account look at this world and govern it by his providence; for he is anxious about the salvation of men, and dwells with the afflicted, and with them that are of a broken and humble heart; as it is said, "Jehovah is high, and hath respect to the lowly," (Ps. cxxxviii. 6,) and in other passages.

The other meaning is, that the Prophet shews that God is very unlike us; for we tremble in adversity, because we measure him by our standard, and say, "How shall the Lord render assistance to us, who are oppressed?" Besides, men who are in distress are commonly overlooked and despised. Thus we think that God holds us in no estimation, because we form our ideas of him from our own nature. But we ought to entertain very different views of him; and therefore he says, that he "dwelleth in heaven," in order to intimate that he is not liable to human passions; for he is like himself at all times, and never changes his purpose; and therefore as he has once promised restoration to his people, so he will perform it. I do not dislike this interpretation, nor do I reject the former, which is fuller and more abundant, and agrees with other passages of Scripture, that commonly join together those two things; that the Lord dwelleth in heaven, and taketh care of human affairs, and especially of his children, as I stated briefly a little before.

Who dwelleth in eternity. We are fickle, and apply our minds sometimes to one subject, and sometimes to another; and our hearts do not continue to be fixed on that which we have once embraced. On this account he distinguishes between God and men, for on him no shadow of change falls; but we have not such steadfastness as to exercise constant care about those who need our assistance.

I inhabit the high and holy. קדוש (*kādōsh*) sometimes denotes the temple, but here it denotes heaven itself. We see the reason why he calls him "the Holy One," and "the inhabitant of the holy and lofty place." It is in order to inform us how much he differs from us, and how unlike he

is to our nature. Besides, we ought to draw from it a singular consolation, that the Lord wishes to assist the wretched, and even chooses for himself a habitation amongst them, that is, provided that they acknowledge their wretchedness.

And with him who is lowly in spirit. Wicked men are oppressed by various calamities, but do not cease to be fierce and haughty. It will be vain for them to hope that God will draw near to them ;[1] for their hearts must be lowly and utterly cast down, if they expect to obtain any assistance from God. Accordingly, he descends even to the lifeless, that he may breathe new life into them and form them anew. Twice he expressly mentions the "lowly spirit," and the "afflicted heart," that we may know that these promises belong to those who, in their afflictions, shall not be hard-hearted and rebellious, and who, in short, shall lay aside all haughtiness and be meek and lowly.

16. *Because not for ever will I strive.* He continues the same doctrine; for it was difficult to persuade them of this, seeing that during that painful captivity they perceived that God was their enemy, and could scarcely obtain any taste of the grace of God, by which their hearts might be encouraged or relieved. The Prophet therefore meets this doubt, and shews that the punishments which they shall endure will be for a short time, and that God will not always be angry with them ; that God has indeed very good reason to be angry, but yet that he will relinquish his right, and will make abatement of that which he might have demanded. Thus he connects the wrath of God with that moderation by which he soothes believers, that they may not be discouraged ; for, although he draws an argument from the nature of God, yet this promise is especially directed to the Church.

This sentence, therefore, ought always to be remembered by us amidst our sorest afflictions, lest we should think that God is our enemy, or that he will always contend with us. When he says that God is angry, he speaks as if he made an admission, and in accordance with the feelings of our flesh ; for we cannot form any other conception of God during our

[1] "Que telles gens n'esperent point que Dieu s'approche d'eux." "Let not such persons hope that God will draw near to them."

afflictions, than that he is angry with us. It is even profitable to be moved by this feeling, that it may instruct us to repentance; and therefore this form of expression must be viewed as referring exclusively to our capacity, and not to God.

For the spirit shall be clothed, (or, *shall be concealed*, or, *shall fail.*) He assigns the reason why he will not always strive. There are various interpretations of this passage. Among others this appears to me to be the more appropriate; that "the spirit is clothed" with the body, as with a garment. Hence also the body is called the tabernacle, and, as it were, the habitation of the spirit. If we adopt this signification of the word, there will be two modes of interpreting this clause. Some explain it as referring to the last resurrection: "the spirit shall be clothed;" that is, after having gone out of the body, will again return to it as to its habitation. Thus there will be an argument from the greater to the less: "I will raise up dead bodies; why then shall I not restore you, though half-dead, to a better life?" Another meaning, which is also adopted by some, will be simpler and better; for the interpretation of the clause, as referring to the last resurrection, is too remote from the context. "I surrounded the spirit with a body;" as if he had said, "I created men, and therefore will take care of them."

But for my own part, I think that the Prophet rises higher; for he shews that the Lord deals so gently and kindly with us, because he perceives how weak and feeble we are; as is also pointed out in other passages of Scripture, such as Psalm ciii. 13, 14. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our condition, remembering that we are dust. The age of man is like grass, and flourisheth as a flower in the field." The same thing is said in Psalm lxxviii. 38, 39. "Yet being inclined to mercy, he was gracious to their iniquity, and did not destroy them, and often recalled his anger, and did not stir up all his indignation, remembering that they were flesh, and a wind that passeth away and returneth not again." Here the Prophet appears to me to mean the same thing; as if the Lord had said, "I am unwilling to try my strength

with breath or wind, which would be as if with grass or a leaf, that shall suddenly vanish away when they have felt the heat of the sun."

יעטף (*yăgnătōph*) is explained by some to mean "Shall fail;" which agrees very well with this passage; for our spirit shall fail, when the Lord puts forth his power against us. Leaving the signification of the words as somewhat doubtful, we sufficiently understand the Prophet's design. He shews that God deals gently with us, and acts with little severity in correcting our sins, because he takes into account our weakness, and wishes to support and relieve it.

17. *For the iniquity of his lust.* Here he complains of the obstinate wickedness of the people, and shews that the Lord had very good reason for punishing him in this manner; so that there can be no complaint of his immoderate cruelty. בצעו (*bĕtzāgnō*) is translated by some "lust," and by others "covetousness." If it be "covetousness," it will then be a figurative mode of expression, in which a part is taken for the whole; for this is the source from which all evils arise. (1 Tim. vi. 10.) But we may take it generally for every kind of sinful desire; for it was on account of the various and numerous vices by which the Jews were polluted, that the Lord was angry, and inflicted on them severe punishments. But he expressly mentions "lust," in order to intimate that they were punished, not because they were openly wicked, but because they were sinful in the sight of God; for it is enough to condemn them, that God is Judge of the hearts, and punishes not only for outward crimes, but likewise for wicked dispositions and "lusts." At the same time he reminds them that their punishment is just, in order that, being conscious of guilt, they may humbly pray for pardon.

I struck him, I hid myself. He means that his favour was, in some respects, withdrawn and "hidden" for a time. Now, he speaks according to the opinion of men, because, as we have already said, we imagine that God is an enemy, and is angry with us, when he punishes for our transgressions. And it is necessary that we should have those views and conceptions of him, that we may arrive at a true acknowledgment of our sins; for we should never acknowledge them

sincerely, or be distressed on account of them, if we did not reflect with ourselves, and know that we had provoked God's wrath. But, while it is desirable that we should be led to repentance in this manner, we must beware, on the other hand, lest in consequence of imagining that God is hostile and unwilling to be reconciled to us, we should be swallowed up by sorrow. The Prophet therefore restrains these immoderate terrors, and forbids us to judge of God according to our natural disposition; for although he chastises us, he does not cease to cherish a father's love and affection towards those whom he has once embraced.

But he went away. This is the rebelliousness which the Prophet blames and rebukes, that the people were in no degree made better, but persevered in their wickedness. He shews that they were desperate, because the violent remedies which the Lord had tried could not bring them back into the right way.

18. *I have seen his ways.*[1] Here the Lord, on the contrary, magnifies his mercy, because he is gracious to that people, though obstinate and rebellious, and anticipates them by his grace and mercy. As if he had said, "I laboured to bring back this people to repentance by my chastisements, because they violently pursued their lusts; but they were obstinate and untameable; all that I did was of no avail. I might justly, indeed, have ruined him, but I choose rather to heal and preserve. This cannot be done but by distinguished and incomparable mercy. I will therefore cease to punish them." For these reasons Isaiah gradually magnifies the mercy of God, whom he represents as a physician considering what remedies are best adapted for healing this people. Now, our diseases are incurable, if the Lord do not anticipate us by his mercy.

And will guide him. No chastisements, however severe, will drive us to repentance, if the Lord do not quicken us by his Spirit; for the consequence will be, to render us more rebellious and hard-hearted. And so we may behold, in the example of this people, an image of mankind; that we may

[1] "When he (the people of Israel) humbled himself during the affliction which came upon him."—*Jarchi.*

clearly see what is our rebellion and obstinacy against God, and what remedies are necessary for curing our diseases; and that, when we are diseased and almost beyond hope, we are healed, are brought back to the right path, and afterwards continue in it. Hence follows consolation:

Restoring comforts to him. If piety be wanting, there can be no faith and no consolation; for they who are not dissatisfied with themselves on account of their vices can look for nothing but the wrath of God, terrors and despair. It is proper, therefore, to observe the context, in which the Prophet, after mentioning "healing," next mentions "consolation;" for they whose diseases have been cured obtain, at the same time, that joy of heart and that consolation of which they had been deprived.

When he adds, *To his mourners*, he appears especially to denote good men,[1] who were few in number; as appears clearly from the complaints of the prophets, who exclaim loudly against the stupidity which had seized the people on every side. Thus he describes those who, amidst the universal guilt, were constrained by sincere grief to mourn, and who not only bewailed the miseries of the people, but deeply groaned under the burden of God's wrath, while others indulged freely in their pleasures.

19. *I create the fruit of the lips.* This is an explanation of the former statement, or of the manner in which the Lord will give consolation to this people. It is, because he will promise and offer *peace* to them; for by "the fruit of the lips" he means that he will cause them to hear the glad tidings of peace, by which they shall be filled with joy.

Peace, peace. I think that he speaks of the publication of "peace," the ministry of which was committed to the prophets, and was afterwards enjoined on the apostles and the other ministers of the Gospel; as Paul teaches that they "are ambassadors for Christ, to reconcile men to God." (2 Cor. v. 20.) The repetition of the word "Peace" is intended to express not only certainty, but also uninterrupted continuance. As if he had said, "You now hear nothing but dreadful threatenings. The doctrine of grace and sal-

[1] "Fideles." "Believers."

vation is silent, because you are incapable of it. Such is your obstinacy that I must deal with you by threatenings and terrors. But I will one day restore the doctrine of 'peace,' and open the lips of the prophets, that they may proclaim it to you."

To them that are far off. This is added, because the people who had been carried into captivity did not think that these things belonged to them, (because they were "far off,") but perhaps to those who were at home; for captivity was a sort of casting off. But the Prophet foretells that, though they are at a great distance, yet they shall be partakers of this grace.

And I heal him. At length he adds the end or effect, that the Lord determines to heal the people; that is, to make them safe and sound. Hence we infer what I remarked a little before, that all that relates to the full and perfect happiness of the Church is absolutely the gift of God.

Paul appears to have glanced at this passage, when he says that Christ "brought peace to them that are near, and to them that are far off." (Eph. ii. 17.) He speaks of Gentiles and Jews; for the Jews were "near," because God had entered into a covenant with them; but the Gentiles were "far off," because they were strangers to that covenant. But the Prophet appears to speak of Jews only.

I reply, Paul adheres to the true meaning of the Prophet, if the whole be but carefully examined; for the Jews are said, in this passage, to be "far off," because the Lord appeared to have driven them out of his house; and in that respect they resembled the Gentiles. Since, therefore, at the time of that casting off, there was no difference between them and the Gentiles, Paul, by putting both, as it were, in the same rank, justly placed them on a level with the Jews, and thus applied to them what the Prophet had spoken about the Jews; as, in a manner not unlike, he elsewhere applies to the Gentiles a passage in Hosea. (Rom. ix. 25; Hos. i. 10.)

20. *But the wicked.* Having formerly spoken of the "peace" which good men shall enjoy, he threatens that the wicked, on the contrary, shall have continual war and inces-

sant uneasiness and distress of heart; in order that good men may value more highly the excellent blessing of "peace," and next, that the reprobate may know that their condition shall in no degree be improved in consequence of that peace which is promised to the children of God. But because the reprobate make false pretensions to the name of God, and vainly glory in it, the Prophet shews that there is no reason why they should flatter themselves, or advance any claim, on the ground of this promise, since they can have no share in this peace. Nor will it avail them anything, that God, having compassion upon his people, receives them into favour, and commands peace to be proclaimed to them.

As the troubled sea. That metaphor of "the sea" is elegant, and very well fitted to describe the uneasiness of the wicked; for of itself "the sea is troubled." Though it be not beaten by the wind or agitated by frightful tempests, its billows carry on mutual war, and dash against each other with terrible violence. In the same manner wicked men are "troubled" by inward distress, which is deeply seated in their hearts. They are terrified and alarmed by conscience, which is the most agonizing of all torments and the most cruel of all executioners. The furies agitate and pursue the wicked, not with burning torches, (as the fables run,) but with anguish of conscience and the torment of wickedness; for every one is distressed by his own wickedness and his own alarm;[1] every one is agonized and driven to madness by his own guilt; they are terrified by their own evil thoughts and by the pangs of conscience. Most appropriately, therefore, has the Prophet compared them to a stormy and troubled sea. Whoever then wishes to avoid these alarms and this frightful agony of heart, let him not reject that peace which the Lord offers to him. There can be no middle course between them; for, if you do not lay aside sinful desires and accept of this peace, you must unavoidably be miserably distressed and tormented.

21. *There is no peace to the wicked.* He confirms the preceding statement, namely, that in vain shall the reprobate endeavour to seek peace, for everywhere they will meet with

[1] "Et gehenné." "And by the hell within him."

war. It is God who threatens war, and therefore there can be no hope of "peace." Wicked men would indeed wish to enjoy peace, and ardently long for it; for there is nothing which they more eagerly desire than to be at ease, and to lull their consciences, that they may freely take their pleasures and indulge in their vices. They drive away all thoughts about the judgment of God, and endeavour to stupify themselves and to repose in indolence, and think that these are the best ways and methods of obtaining peace. But they never shall enjoy it; for, until men have been reconciled to God, conscience will never cease to annoy and carry on war with them.

Saith my God. Thus he represents God as the only author of peace, that he may, by this dreadful threatening, tear from the Jews their dearest pleasures; and calls him "his God," in opposition to the vain boasting of those who falsely boasted of his name; for they cannot acknowledge God, so long as they reject his Prophet and his doctrine. For this reason the Prophet boldly declares that he has received a command from God to declare perpetual war against them.

CHAPTER LVIII.

1. Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

1. Clama in gutture, ne cohibeas; quasi tuba exalta vocem tuam, et annuntia populo meo peccatum suum, et domui Iacob iniquitatem suam.

2. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

2. Me tamen quotidie quærunt, et scire vias meas nolunt; quasi gens quæ justitiam fecerit, et judicium Dei sui non intermiserit; sciscitantur ex me judicia justitiæ, appropinquare Deo volunt.

3. Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

3. Quare jejunavimus, et non aspexisti? humiliavimus animas nostras, et nesciisti? Ecce quo die jejunatis, invenitis voluntatem, et omnes facultates vestras exigitis.

4. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of

4. Ecce, ad litem et contentionem jejunatis; atque ut percutiatis pugno

wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do this* day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him?* wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

6. *Is* not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

7. *Is it* not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

8. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy rere-ward.

9. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

10. And *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noon-day:

11. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

12. And *they that shall be* of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

13. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call

impio. Ne jejunetis sicut hodie, ut audiri faciatis in excelso vocem vestram.

5. An tale est jejunium quod elegi? ut die affligat homo animam suam, et quasi juncus demittat caput suum, sternat saccum et cinerem? An hoc vocabis jejunium, et diem gratum Iehovæ?

6. Annon hoc est jejunium quod elegi? solvere colligationes impias, dissolvere fasciculos graves, oppressos dimittere liberos, atque ut omne jugum abrumpatis?

7. Annon ut partiaris esurienti panem tuam, et pauperes vagos inducas domum? Si videris nudum, operias eum, et a carne tua ne te abscondas?

8. Tunc proferetur ut aurora lux tua; et sanitas tua protinus germinabit; justitia anteibit faciem tuam, et gloria Iehovæ colliget te.

9. Tunc invocabis, et Iehova exaudiet; clamabis, et dicet, Ecce adsum; si abstuleris e medio tui onus, et emissionem digiti, et sermonem vanitatis, (*vel, inutilem.*)

10. Si effuderis famelico animam tuam, et animam afflictam satiaveris, orietur in tenebris lux tua, et caligo tua erit sicut meridies.

11. Et deducet te Iehova semper, et saturabit in siccitatibus animam tuam, et ossa tua saginabit. Et eris quasi hortus irriguus, et scaturigo aquarum, cujus aquæ non deficiunt.

12. Et erunt ex te qui instaurent deserta seculi; fundamenta generationis et generationis excitabis. Et vocaberis rupturæ reparator, director semitarum ad inhabitandum.

13. Si averteris a sabbato pedem tuum, nec facies voluntatem tuam, in die sancto meo, et vocaveris sab-

the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:

14. Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken *it.*

batum delicias ad consecrandum Iehovæ, eò quòd sit honorabile, et honorem illi tribueris, ut non exequaris vias tuas, nec inveniatur voluntas tua, nec loquutus fueris verbum;

14. Tunc delectaberis in Iehova, et equitare te faciam super excelsa terræ, et pascam te hæreditatis Iacob patris tui; quia os Iehovæ loquutum est.

1. *Cry with the throat.* This chapter has been badly divided; for these words are connected with what goes before; and therefore, if we wish to understand the Prophet's meaning, we ought to read them as if there had been no separation. The Prophet has testified that the people shall be punished in such a manner as to leave some hope of peace, and next has threatened that the wicked, who by indolent pride endeavour to escape from God, shall have continual war. He now confirms that doctrine, and informs them that God has given him this command, to "cry with the throat," that is, to use a common expression, (*à plein gosier,*) "at the full stretch of the voice."

Why is this? It is to *make known to the people their sins.* He does not speak merely of the stretch of the voice, but means by it that keenness and severity of language which hypocrites especially need, as if God were throwing thunderbolts against them from heaven; for they are delighted with their vices, if they be not severely reproved and dragged forth to the light, or rather if they be not violently thrown down.

When he adds, *Spare not,* it is a mode of expression very frequently employed by Hebrew writers, such as, "I cry, and am not silent." (Ps. xxii. 2.) It is equivalent to a common expression, (*Crie sans espargner,*) "Cry without sparing." We have said that the Prophet does not speak of the mere sound of the voice, but means a severe and harsh reproof, which is very necessary to be sharply used towards hypocrites. For instance, if the prophets merely spoke of the Law of the Lord, and shewed what is the rule of a good

and holy life, and recommended the worship of God, and likewise reproved vices, but without employing any vehemence of language, what impression would they produce on hypocrites, whose conscience is lulled in such a manner that they cannot be aroused but by applying spurs? And so a simple manner of teaching would not be enough, unless they were sharply attacked, and the thunderbolts of words were launched against them.

Paul also, imitating the prophets, after having condemned all mankind, breaks out with greater vehemence against those who made some profession of holiness and abused God's patience. "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the Law, and boastest in God, and knowest his will, and approvest what is excellent, being instructed out of the Law; and trustest that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of those who are in darkness, an instructor of fools, a teacher of the ignorant, having the form of knowledge and of truth by the Law. Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou who preachest that men ought not to steal, dost thou steal?" (Rom. ii. 17-21.) Against such persons he threatens the judgment of God and terrible vengeance, because they have abused his goodness, and vainly boast of his name.

Thus the Prophet, in this passage, sharpens his pen expressly against the Jews, who gloried in the name of God, and yet proudly rose up against him. This is the method, therefore, that ought to be followed against hypocrites, who hold out an empty show of holiness; at least, if we wish to discharge our duty in a proper and useful manner. As the Lord exercised the prophets in this kind of combat, so we must be exercised in it at the present day; so that we must not hold our peace, or give them a slight reproof, but must exclaim against them with all our might.

It might be objected, "If the Lord commands his servants to reprove the sins of the people, to whom he promises peace, he undoubtedly intended to leave to them the hope of salvation. And yet it is certain that those words are addressed to the reprobate, against whom he had formerly declared war." I reply, believers were at that time reduced to a

small number; for there were few who embraced the peace that was offered to them. Accordingly, when Isaiah holds out the hope of approaching peace, he has his eye on that little flock; when he threatens war, his aim is to terrify the multitude, who were estranged from God and despised his warnings; for the state of the people was such, as we have formerly seen, (Is. i. 21,) that scarcely any pure or sound morality remained.

And to the house of Jacob their iniquity. With good reason does he call them "the house of Jacob," when the greater part of the people were corrupted. And we ought carefully to observe this distinction, that the prophets sometimes address the multitude at large, and sometimes limit their discourse to a few believers. Nor is it without witty and bitter mockery that he gives the designations of "his people" and "children of Jacob" to those who had degenerated from their stock and had basely revolted from the faith of the fathers. The concession made is therefore ironical; as if he had said that there is no privilege which hinders them from hearing what they deserve.

2. *Yet they seek me daily.* Here he intended to take away every ground of objection from hypocrites, who had their answers ready. "We fear, serve, and love God, and seek him with the whole heart. Why do you rebuke us as if we were irreligious persons; for we wish to regulate our life according to the injunctions of the Law." To meet this objection, he affirms that they do nothing in a pure or sincere manner, that everything is pretended and hypocritical, and consequently is of no value before God, who demands the whole heart. (Gen. xvii. 1.)

It is proper to observe this order which the Prophet has followed. After having threatened war against wicked men and hypocrites, he now rebukes them severely, and takes away the pretences and disguises under which they shrouded themselves. This is the manner in which hypocrites should be treated, and dragged, as it were, out of their lurking-places; for otherwise doctrine could produce no good effect upon them. And not only should godly teachers observe this order, but every person ought to apply this manner of

teaching for his own use, that he may not be satisfied with himself or flatter his vices; that he may not practise hypocrisy on himself, or suffer himself to be deceived by the tricks of Satan. Let him therefore bring a pure and upright heart, if he wish to profit by the doctrine of the word, and to be acceptable to God.

And wish to know my ways. Although Isaiah admits that traitors and liars have some shew of holiness, yet, on the other hand, by a bitter figure of speech, he censures them, as if he had said that in their shameful boasting there was excessive wickedness. Thus it is not simple irony, but there is likewise added a complaint, that, while they apparently labour to serve God, still, if any person examine them more closely, and inquire into their whole manner of life, he will perceive that their hearts are altogether estranged from God.

They ask of me the judgments of righteousness.[1] Those who think that in these words hypocrites blame God, and rise up against him, as if they would enter into controversy with him, have not understood the Prophet's meaning. I acknowledge that he does this soon afterwards; but before coming down to it, he tears off their mask of pretended godliness. After having said that they "seek God daily," as if there were nothing that occupied their thoughts more earnestly than religion, he proceeds in the same strain, and says, that they "ask judgments," that they may serve God, and observe the rule of a holy life, that is, by pretending to burn with zeal for religion. And indeed the Prophet here enumerates the most important exercises of believers, which sometimes are ostentatiously imitated by the wicked. Now, the chief point of religion is, to inquire into the will of God, that we may regulate our life by the rule which he has laid down for us, and to depend on his mouth. But the children of God, in this respect, are falsely copied by hypocrites, so that they appear to practise all that relates to the true worship of God, and sometimes to exceed the very best of men.

[1] "They consult the priests and prophets as to those laws and statutes about which there is any uncertainty, as if they were afraid of breaking the commandments of God through ignorance."—*Rosenmüller.*

3. *Wherefore have we fasted?* He proceeds farther with the same subject, and says that feigned and perverse worshippers of God are not only blinded by their hypocrisy, but likewise swell with pride, so that they venture openly to murmur at God, and to complain when he presses hard upon them, as if he had done them a grievous injury. "Dost thou reject our services, fastings, and prayers? Why are they not acceptable to thee? Do we not vex ourselves in vain?"

He has admitted, as we have already said, that hypocrites have some outward show of holiness, by which they deceive men; but now he declares that inwardly they are also puffed up and intoxicated by pride, while they have pretended good works, by which they think that they satisfy God, and, on this pretence, they carry themselves high against the prophets, and indulge in the worst vices, such as unbelief, rebellion, and obstinacy against God, distrust, cruelty, fraud, and pillage. These are light matters in themselves, and are easily washed away by other external exercises; for the former are their pre-eminent merits, in which they think that the worship of God consists, and from which they hope to obtain the pardon of all their sins. Thus they "strain out a gnat,[1] and do not scruple to swallow a whole camel." (Matt. xxiii. 24.) If such characters had been found among the Jews only, and if the world had changed its disposition, we should have needed to seek far for examples; but since we have experience of the same thing every day, there is no necessity for giving ourselves much trouble about the exposition of this passage.

This complaint may be viewed as referring both to the word and to the hand of God. In both ways God judges hypocrites; for he rebukes by the word, and punishes for their obstinate malice; and therefore those words may be viewed as referring both to the chastisements and to the preceding reproof. For my own part, I interpret it as relating to the word, and as a rebuke to hypocrites, who boasted of their fastings, and contrasted them with the censures of the

[1] For the meaning of this phrase, see our author's Commentary on the Harmony of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Vol. iii. p. 93.—*Ed.*

prophets; as if they were the true worshippers of God, and were unjustly rebuked. I differ from those who think that the people blame God for treating them harshly during their captivity. On the contrary, it appears to me that they complain of the prophets for rebuking them with great sharpness and severity; for the Jews wished to be regarded as devout and religious persons, and could not patiently endure to be condemned for impiety and wickedness. For this reason the Prophet exposes their dispositions, and shews that they make war with God, that they may not suppose that they have to deal with him as a private individual.

Ye find pleasure and exact all your labours. In the second part of the verse he refutes, in the name of God, those virtues which hypocrites proclaim with the sound of a trumpet. It is, because they do not nevertheless lay aside the sinful dispositions of the flesh, or begin to deny themselves; for he condemns them chiefly on the ground of having been devoted to their desires, and next he enumerates particular kinds of vices. Hence we may easily infer that their heart is not moved by any anxiety to repent.

4. *Behold, for strife and contention ye fast.* This verse ought to be connected with the end of the preceding verse; for, having in the former clause introduced hypocrites as complaining of the violence and harshness of the prophets, he assigns, in the latter clause, the reason why the Lord loathes their fasts and their other performances. It is because they do not proceed from pure affection of heart. What the inclination of their heart is, he shews from its fruits; for he sends them back to the duties of the second table, from which it is easily seen what we are. Purity of heart is manifested by our living innocently, and abstaining from all deceit and injustice. These are the marks of pure affection, in the absence of which the Lord rejects, and even abhors, all external worship. Wherever, on the other hand, cheating, and plunder, and extortion prevail, it is very certain that there is no fear of God.

Thus he reproaches hypocrites with making their fasts to give greater encouragement to sin, and with giving a looser rein to their lusts. We have experience of this every day.

Not only do many people fast in order to atone for their cheating and robberies, and to plunder more freely, but even that, during the time of the fast, they may have greater leisure for examining their accounts, perusing documents, and calculating usury, and contriving methods by which they may lay hold on the property of their debtors. On that account they frequently throw this labour on Lent and on the stated times of fasts; and, in like manner, other notable hypocrites hear many Masses every day, that they may more freely, and with less interruption, and under the pretence of religion, contrive their cheating and treachery.

Fast not, as ye do this day. At length he rejects their fasts, however highly they may value them; because in this manner the wrath of God is still more provoked. Immediately afterwards he rejects also their prayers.

That ye may make your voice to be heard on high.[1] Hence it is evident, (as we have explained fully in our exposition of Isa. i. 11,) that God approves of no duties which are not accompanied by sincere uprightness of heart. Certainly no sacrifice is more excellent than calling upon God; and yet we see how all prayers are stained and polluted by impurity of heart. Besides, in consequence of fasting being usually joined to prayer, the Prophet takes this for granted; for it is an appendage to prayer. He therefore forbids such men to offer up solemn prayer accompanied by fasting; because they will gain nothing, except that the Lord will punish them more severely. And hence we infer (as has been already said) that the Lord pays no regard to external works, if they be not preceded by sincere fear of God.

Such fasting as was customary among the Jews is not here blamed in itself, as if it were a superstitious ceremony, but abuse of fasting, and false confidence. This ought to be carefully observed; for we would need to deal very differently

[1] "Luther and other early writers understand the last clause as a prohibition of noisy quarrels, 'to make the voice heard on high,' being taken as equivalent to letting it be heard in the street. (Isa. xlii. 3.) Vitringa and the later writers give it a meaning altogether different, by taking מרום (*mārōm*) in the sense of heaven, (Isa. lvii. 15,) and the whole clause as a declaration that such fasting would not have the desired effect of gaining audience and acceptance for their prayers. (See Joel i. 14; ii. 12.)" —*Alexander*.

with the Papists, if we blamed their fasts. They contain nothing but superstition, being tied to this or that day, or to fixed seasons, as if during the rest of the time they were at liberty to gormandize; while they think that the flesh is unclean, and yet allow every kind of indulgence to it; provided only that they do not once gormandize on a fast-day, they think that they have discharged their duty admirably well. Since therefore there is nothing in them that can be approved, we may absolutely condemn them.

But the dispute on this occasion was different. That fasting which the Jews observed was laudable in itself, because God had appointed it; but a false opinion respecting it was censurable. Among the Papists, on the other hand, we must condemn both the false opinion and the institution itself; because it is wicked. The Papists have this in common with the Jews, that they think that they serve God by it, and that it is a meritorious work. Yet fasting is not the worship of God, and is not in itself commanded by him, in the same manner as those works which he enjoins in the Law; but it is an external exercise, which is auxiliary to prayer, or is useful for subduing the flesh, or testifying our humiliation, when, as guilty persons, we implore that the wrath of God may be turned away in adversity. But the reader will find the use and design of fasting more fully discussed in our Institutes. (Book iv. chap. xii. 15-21.)

5. *Is it such a fast as I have chosen?* He confirms the preceding statement, and shews that fasting is neither desired nor approved by God in itself, but so far as it is directed to its true end. He did not wish that it should be altogether abolished, but the improper use of it; that is, because they believed the worship of God to consist in it, and by neglecting or even despising true godliness, thought that bodily exercise was enough; just as hypocrites always put forward external ceremonies, as if they were satisfactions to appease God.

Again, because men, through their rashness, define what is the worship of God, he expressly refers us to his own will, that we may not suppose that he approves of everything which our own judgment pronounces to be right. Although

men are well pleased with themselves, and swell with astonishing haughtiness, and indulge in insolent boasting, the Lord rejects and abhors them, because he claims for himself alone the right to "choose." Now, "to choose" a thing is of the same import as "to take pleasure in it."

And hanging his head like a bulrush. He says that he is not delighted if a man passes a day in hunger, and then walks with a sad and downcast look. The Prophet employs an appropriate metaphor; because the bulrush, though it is straight, is easily bent. So hypocrites bend themselves, and bow down the head, as if under the influence of oppressive leanness, or display some empty appearance of humility. The Prophet therefore intended to censure superstitious attitudes, in which hypocrites imagine that there is some holiness.

And spread sackcloth and ashes. These things also were added to fasting, especially when they made solemn professions of repentance; for they clothed themselves with "sackcloth," and threw "ashes" on their head. (Joel i. 13.) Now, such an exercise was holy and approved by God; and we see that the prophets, while they exhort the people to repentance, cry aloud for "sackcloth and ashes." But as we have said that fasting is not here condemned on its own account, so Isaiah does not condemn those outward ceremonies, but reproves hypocrites for separating them from reality.

If it be asked, Are "sackcloth" and "ashes" suitable to our time? I reply, they are indifferent matters, which may be used for edification; but in the light of the Gospel, which has brought liberty to us, we have no need of such figures. At the same time, we should attend to the difference between Eastern nations, which make use of a great abundance and variety of ceremonies, and Western nations, whose habits are far more simple. If we wished to imitate the former, it would be nothing else than to enact the part of apes, or of stage-players. Yet there is nothing to hinder those who intend to confess their guilt, from wearing soiled and tattered garments, after the manner used by suppliants.[1]

[1] "Selon la coustume des criminels qui demandent misericorde." "According to the custom of criminals who implore mercy."

A day acceptable to Jehovah. Hence it is evident that to solemn prayer, when a holy assembly was held, there was added fasting; for fasting, as we have already said, is an appendage to prayer; as we see that it was added to prayer by Christ himself. (Matt. xvii. 21.) It is not appointed, therefore, for its own sake, but is directed to a different end.

6. *Is not this the fast which I have chosen?* The Prophet shews what are the real duties of piety, and what God chiefly recommends to us; namely, to relieve those who are wretched and pressed with a heavy burden. But the Prophet appears to abolish fasting universally, when, in place of it, he enumerates those works which are most highly acceptable to God. I reply, fasting is approved when it is accompanied by that love which we owe to our fellow-men; and therefore the Prophet directs that we shall be tried by this principle, that our consciences be entire and pure, that we exercise mutual kindness towards each other; for if this order prevail, then fasting, which shall be added to it, will be pleasing and acceptable to God. But here he does not at all mention purity of heart. I reply, it is described by works, as by its fruits, from which it is easily seen what kind of heart we have. Next, he enumerates the duties of the Second Table, under which, as we have elsewhere seen, by a figure of speech in which a part is taken for the whole, he includes the whole observation of the Law; for it would not be enough to assist our neighbour by kind offices, if at the same time we despised God. But we must observe the Prophet's design; because the love which we owe to our neighbours cannot be sincerely cultivated, unless when we love them in God. In order to make trial of our fear of God, he demands these as more immediate signs, if we live justly, inoffensively, and kindly with each other. Besides, he was not satisfied with outward appearance; and indeed the love of our neighbour does not thrive where the Spirit of God does not reign; and therefore Paul includes it in the enumeration of "the works of the Spirit." (Gal. v. 22.) Thus when the observation of the Law is spoken of, not only outward works, but likewise the dispositions of the heart, must be taken into the account.

To loose wicked bindings. Some explain it to mean "sin-

ful thoughts," by which the hearts of men are entangled. But Isaiah appears to me to have had another object in view, namely, that hypocrites are exceedingly cruel in distressing the poor, and lay heavy burdens upon them. He therefore calls them "bonds," or "bindings," or, as we commonly say, "oppressions." Of the same import is what he adds, *to undo the heavy burdens*, under the weight of which the poor groan and are overwhelmed. He again adds, "to let the oppressed go free," and expresses the same thing in a variety of words. Thus the Prophet does not define what is meant by "fasting," but shews what the Lord requires in the first place and chiefly, and in what manner our obedience can be approved by him, and what ought to be the dispositions of those who endeavour to fast in a right manner.

7. *Is it not to break thy bread to the hungry?* He goes on to describe the duties of love of our neighbour, which he had described briefly in the preceding verse; for, having formerly said that we must abstain from every act of injustice, he now shews that we ought to exercise kindness towards the wretched, and those who need our assistance. Uprightness and righteousness are divided into two parts; first, that we should injure nobody; and secondly, that we should bestow our wealth and abundance on the poor and needy. And these two ought to be joined together; for it is not enough to abstain from acts of injustice, if thou refuse thy assistance to the needy; nor will it be of much avail to render thine aid to the needy, if at the same time thou rob some of that which thou bestowest on others. Thou must not relieve thy neighbours by plunder or theft; and if thou hast committed any act of injustice, or cruelty, or extortion, thou must not, by a pretended compensation, call on God to receive a share of the plunder. These two parts, therefore, must be held together, provided only that we have our love of our neighbour approved and accepted by God.

By commanding them to "break bread to the hungry,"[1]

[1] Grotius says that "the bread in those countries was such as could be easily 'broken,' [like the thin cakes which are still common in the East]; and that to 'break,' consequently, meant to 'impart,' or to distribute. The phraseology is borrowed from the breaking of the bread which is dis-

he intended to take away every excuse from covetous and greedy men, who allege that they have a right to keep possession of that which is their own. "This is mine, and therefore I may keep it for myself. Why should I make common property of that which God has given me?" He replies, "It is indeed thine, but on this condition, that thou share it with the hungry and thirsty, not that thou eat it thyself alone." And indeed this is the dictate of common sense, that the hungry are deprived of their just right, if their hunger is not relieved. That sad spectacle extorts compassion even from the cruel and barbarous. He next enumerates various kinds, which commonly bend hearts of iron to (*συμπάθειαν*) fellow-feeling or compassion; that the savage disposition of those who are not moved by feeling for a brother's poverty and necessity may be the less excusable. At length he concludes—

And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh. Here we ought to observe the term *flesh*, by which he means all men universally, not one of whom we can behold, without seeing, as in a mirror, "our own flesh." It is therefore a proof of the greatest inhumanity, to despise those in whom we are constrained to recognise our own likeness.

8. *Then shall break forth as the dawn*[1] *thy light.* The Prophet shews that God is not too rigorous, and does not demand from us more than what is proper; and that hypocrites complain of him without cause, when they accuse him of excessive severity. When their works are condemned, they murmur, and reply that God can never be satisfied, that they do not know what they should do, or what course they should follow. He replies that he demands nothing else than a pure and honest heart, that is, an upright conscience; that if they have this, God will graciously receive them, and will bear testimony to their holiness, and will bestow every kind of blessing on those whose faults he justly chastises; and lastly, that there is no reason why they should murmur at him as excessively stern and harsh, because they

tributed by the head of a family to the domestics at his table."—*Rosenmüller.*

[1] "As the pillar of the dawn bursts through the clouds."—*Jarchi.*

will find him to be kind and bountiful when they shall lay down all hypocrisy, and devote themselves sincerely to his service.

We should observe the particle *then;* for it means that hypocrites, on the contrary, are very far from the true worship of God, though they wish to be reckoned very holy persons. But he holds them to be fully convicted, when he shews from their works that they neither worship nor fear God. By the word *light* he means prosperity, as by the word "darkness" is meant a wretched and afflicted life; and this mode of expression occurs frequently in Scripture.

And thy health. By "health" he means prosperity and safety, as we shall afterwards see in another passage, because the wounds inflicted by the hand of God on account of their sins had brought the people so low that they wasted away like a sick man under terrible disease. No kind of disease is more severe than to be pursued by God's righteous vengeance, or consumed under his curse.

Righteousness shall go before thy face. "Righteousness" may be taken in two senses, either for the testimony of "righteousness," or for good order; because God will put an end to the confusion, and will restore everything to its proper place. Thus the former meaning amounts to this, "When God shall be pacified towards thee, the testimony of thy righteousness shall be visible before God and men, as if some herald went before thee." There are some who prefer to expound the word "righteousness" as meaning just government, which is the gift of God, and a token of his kindness as a Father; and we have seen that this word is sometimes used in that sense by Hebrew writers. But the latter clause which follows, *And the glory of Jehovah will gather thee,* leads me to prefer the former exposition, "Thy righteousness shall go forth;" that is, "All shall acknowledge thee to be holy and righteous, though formerly thou wast guilty and convicted. So shalt thou also be adorned with the glory of the Lord, though formerly thou wast loaded with reproaches." For we are reproached and disgraced, while we suffer the punishment of our sins.

9. *Then shalt thou call.* Isaiah follows out what he had formerly begun, that everything shall prosper well with the

Jews, if they shall be just and inoffensive and free from doing wrong to any one, so that it shall manifest their piety and religion. He pronounces what is said by Hosea, (vi. 6,) and repeated by Christ, that "mercy shall be preferred to sacrifice." (Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7.) Thus after having spoken of the duties which men owe to one another, and testified that it shall be well with those who shall perform those duties, he adds, "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will listen to thee." The chief part of our happiness is, if God listen to us; and, on the other hand, nothing could be more miserable than to have him for an enemy. In order to try our faith, he attributes to our prayers what he bestows willingly and by free grace; for if he always bestowed his blessings while we were asleep, the desire to pray would become utterly cold, and indeed would cease altogether; and so the kindness of God would be an encouragement to slothfulness. Although he anticipates us by his free grace, yet he wishes that our prayers for his blessings should be offered, and therefore he adds, *Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Behold, here I am.* This promise likewise contains an exhortation, that we may not lie idle. When he says that he is present, this indeed is not visible to our eyes; but he gives a practical declaration that he is near and reconciled to us.

If thou shalt take away from the midst of thee the yoke. In the latter part of the verse he again repeats that God will be reconciled to the Jews if they repent. Under the word "yoke" he includes all the annoyances that are offered to the poor; as if he had said, "If thou shalt cease to annoy thy brethren, and shalt abstain from all violence and deceit, the Lord will bestow upon thee every kind of blessing."

And the pointing of the finger.[1] This includes every kind of attack; for we are said to "point the finger," when we

[1] "Grotius thus explains this clause, 'If thou shalt cease to point at good men with "the disreputable finger," (as Persius calls it,) and to mock at their simplicity.' In like manner Juvenal says, (Sat. x. 52,)

Quum fortunæ ipsi minaci
Mandaret laqueum, mediumque ostenderet unguem.

On this passage scholiasts observe, that it was an ancient custom, when any person was the object of scorn, or was treated with marked contempt or disgraceful reproach, to point at him by holding out the middle finger." —*Rosenmüller.*

threaten our neighbours, or treat them cruelly, or offer any violence.

And speech of vanity, or *unprofitable speech.* This is the third class of acts of injustice, by which we injure our neighbour when we impose upon him by cunning and deceitful words or flatteries; for every iniquity consists either of concealed malice and deceit, or of open violence.

10. *If thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry.* He goes on to recommend the duties of that love which we owe to one another. The sum of the whole discourse is this, that in vain do men serve God, if they only offer to him trivial and bare ceremonies; and that this is not the right and proper worship of God, who rigidly commands and enjoins us to lead an upright and innocent life with our neighbours, willingly to give ourselves and our labours to them, and to be ready to assist them readily and cheerfully, whenever it is necessary. We should observe the two parts of this duty which the Prophet has expressly described; for in the first place, he recommends to us the feeling of mercy and kindness; and, in the second place, he exhorts us to the work itself and the effect. It would not be enough to perform acts of kindness towards men, if our disposition towards them were not warm and affectionate. "If I give all my goods to the poor," says Paul, "and have not love, I am nothing." (1 Cor. xiii. 3.) To "pour out the soul," therefore, is nothing else than to bewail their distresses, and to be as much affected by their own poverty as if we ourselves endured it; as, on the other hand, all who are limited and devoted to themselves are said to have a hard and seared heart, to "shut up their bowels," (1 John iii. 17,) and to restrain their feelings.[1] Another translation given by some commentators, "If thou shalt offer thy soul," is unworthy of notice.

Thy light shall arise in darkness. Again, there follows the same promise, and under the same figure or metaphor. By "darkness" he denotes adversity, and by "light" prosperity; as if he had said to the people, "The Lord will cause all the miseries by which thou art now oppressed to cease, and sud-

[1] "Qui ferment les entrailles, et sont sans affection." "Who shut up their bowels, and are without affection."

den prosperity shall spring up." He shews, therefore, that there is no reason why they should blame God for punishing them so severely; for they would immediately be delivered and enjoy prosperity if they sincerely worshipped and obeyed God.

11. *And Jehovah will always conduct thee.* He now describes more clearly what he had spoken briefly and figuratively, that God will be their guide, so that they shall be in want of nothing for a full abundance of blessings. God is said to "conduct" us, when we actually feel that he goes before us, as if he were placed before our eyes.

And will satisfy thy soul in drought. The Prophet adds that the aid promised shall not be of short duration, because God never forsakes his people in the middle of the journey, but continues his kindness towards them with unwearied regularity, and for this reason promises that they shall be satisfied amidst the deepest poverty; because God never is in want of any benefits for relieving their poverty, and his act of blessing is of more value than the most abundant rains of the whole year. And yet he does not promise to believers a rich and abundant produce of fruits, or a plentiful harvest, but that God will nourish them, though the earth yield no food. In this way he bids them depend on God's assistance and be satisfied with it, though they be not altogether free from the distresses of famine. In this sense he adds,—

And will make fat thy bones. He does not say that they shall be fully and highly fattened, but that they shall be so lean that the "bones" shall protrude even through the skin. Thus he gives the appellation of "bones" to those who have been worn bare by hunger or famine, men who have hardly anything remaining but dry skin and "bones;" and he means that the Jews will have to contend with want of all things and with leanness, till God shall restore them.

Of the same import are the metaphors which he adds, *a watered garden*, and *a spring of waters.* Isaiah cannot satisfy himself in describing the kindness of God, which he displays towards his sincere worshippers, that men may not seek anywhere else than in themselves the causes of barrenness. It amounts to this, that this fountain of God's kind-

ness never dries up, but always flows, if we do not stop its course by our own fault.

12. *And from thee shall be those who shall restore the deserts of the age.* By "deserts" Isaiah means frightful desolation, which befell the Jews, when they were carried into captivity; for the country was reduced to a wilderness, the city was sacked, the temple was razed, and the people were brought into bondage and scattered. He calls them "deserts of the age," (or of perpetuity,) because the temple could not be immediately repaired, and there was no hope of rebuilding it or of delivering the people. If any city has been ruined or destroyed, while its inhabitants remain, it may be speedily restored; but if none of the inhabitants survive, and if they have been carried away into a distant country, and are very far off, there can be no hope of rebuilding that city; and it will be reckoned monstrous if, after it has lain for a long time in ruins, some person shall say that the people who appear to have perished shall restore and rebuild it.

Since therefore the promise appeared to be incredible, the Prophet intended to meet the doubt; for they might have objected, "If God wishes to restore us, why does he suffer us to languish so long?" He replies that no continuance of delay prevents God from raising again to a lofty situation those who had been sunk low for a long period. Nor must this be limited to the rebuilding of the temple, which was begun by Zerubbabel, (Ez. iii. 8,) and continued by Nehemiah; but it includes the restoration of the Church, which followed after the lapse of several centuries.

The phrase "From thee," means that from that people, though seemingly half dead, there shall arise those who shall repair the melancholy ruins, and shall be architects or workmen to rebuild Jerusalem. The verb בָּנוּ, (*bănū,*) "shall build," is translated by some in a passive sense; but as that way renders the meaning doubtful, the active signification ought to be retained.[1] A little afterwards, he appears to ascribe to the whole people what he had said of a few indi-

[1] "Ewald reads בֻּנּוּ, (*bŭnnū,*) [in the Puhal form,] 'They shall be built by thee;' but this passive form does not occur elsewhere, and is here sustained by no external evidence."—*Alexander.*

viduals; but the meaning is the same; for, if the question be put, "Who rebuilt Jerusalem?" undoubtedly it was that people; but out of that vast multitude the Lord selected a small number and cut off the rest. Some suppose the meaning to be, that the cities will be insufficient for the number of inhabitants, so that they shall be constrained to rebuild other cities which had been formerly destroyed; but this appears to be too unnatural.

Thou wilt raise up the foundations of generation and generation. Some think that this clause conveys what the Prophet had formerly said, and that by "the foundations of generation and generation" are meant those which lay long in a ruinous state; because out of them must the building be immediately raised and set up; for various hinderances had arisen, by which that work was interrupted. But we may view it as referring to the time to come: "Thou wilt raise up buildings, which shall last for a very long period;" for he seems to promise that the condition of the Church shall be of long duration; as if he had said, "Other buildings do not last long, but this shall last for many ages." Yet if any one prefer to view it as referring to the past, I am not much disposed to dispute with him.

And thou shalt be called. Here the Prophet includes both statements; namely, that the people would resemble a ruined building, and next, that they would be perfectly restored. He ascribes this to the Jews, that they shall be repairers and directors of the ways; that is, that the Lord will make use of their labours; for we ought to ascribe everything to the power of God, who is pleased to bestow upon us so high an honour as to permit our hands to be applied to his work. We have here a remarkable promise about gathering and raising up the ruins of the Church; and since the Lord is pleased to make use of our labour, let us not hesitate to be entirely devoted to it; and although the world oppose and mock at us, and account us fools, let us take courage and conquer every difficulty. Our hearts ought to cherish assured confidence, when we know that it is the work of the Lord, and that he has commanded us to execute it.

13. *If thou shalt turn away thy foot from the sabbath.*

Some think that the Prophet alludes to the external observation of the Sabbath, because it was not lawful to perform a journey on that day. (Ex. xx. 8.) Though I do not reject that opinion, yet I think that the meaning is far more extensive; for by a figure of speech, in which a part is taken for the whole, he denotes the whole course of human life; as it is very customary to employ the word "going" or "walking" to denote our life. He says, therefore, "If thou cease to advance in thy course, if thou shut up thy path, walk not according to thine own will," &c. For this is to "turn away the foot from the Sabbath," when we lay ourselves under the necessity of wandering freely and without restraint in our own sinful desires. As he formerly included under the class of fasting all ceremonies and outward masks, in which they made their holiness to consist, and shewed that they were vain and unprofitable; so in this passage he points out the true observation of the Sabbath, that they may not think that it consists in external idleness but in true self-denial, so as to abstain from every act of injustice and wickedness, and from all lusts and wicked thoughts. First, by the word "foot" he denotes actions; because the Jews, though they did not venture to perform a journey, or to cook flesh on a Sabbath-day, yet did not scruple to harass their neighbours and to mock at the afflicted. Yet he immediately passes on to the will and to speeches, so as to include every part of the obedience which we owe to God.

And shalt call the Sabbath a delight. This word, "delight," must be viewed as referring to God, and not to men; because nothing can be more pleasing or acceptable to God, than the observation of the Sabbath, and sincere worship. He carefully inculcates this, that men do wrong, if, laying aside the commandments of God, they esteem highly those things which are of no value; and he warns them that they ought to form their judgment from his will alone. Certain classes of duties are again enumerated by him, by which he shews clearly that the true observation of the Sabbath consists in self-denial and thorough conversion. And thus he pronounces the foundation to be the will, from which proceed speeches, and next actions; for we speak what we have conceived in

our heart, and by speech we make known our will, and afterwards carry it into effect. Whoever then wishes to serve God in a proper manner, must altogether renounce his flesh and his will. And hence we see the reason why God so highly recommends, in the whole Scripture, the observation of the Sabbath; for he contemplated something higher than the outward ceremony, that is, indolence and repose, in which the Jews thought that the greatest holiness consisted. On the contrary, he commanded the Jews to renounce the desires of the flesh, to give up their sinful inclinations, and to yield obedience to him; as no man can meditate on the heavenly life, unless he be dead to the world and to himself. Now, although that ceremony has been abolished, nevertheless the truth remains; because Christ died and rose again, so that we have a continual sabbath; that is, we are released from our works, that the Spirit of God may work mightily in us.

14. *Then wilt thou delight in Jehovah.* He appears to allude to the word *delight* in the preceding verse; for the verb תִּתְעַנַּג, (*tĭthgnănnēg*,) which the Prophet employs, is derived from the same root as עֹנֶג, (*gnōnĕg*,) which he formerly used, when he said that the Lord takes the highest delight in the true observation of the Sabbath. In a word, he means that the people take no delight in God, because they provoke him, and do not obey his will; for if we framed our life in obedience to God, we should be his delight, and, on the other hand, he would be our delight. Thus he affirms that it is owing entirely to the Jews themselves that they do not, by relying on a reconciled God, lead a cheerful and joyful life. By these words he indirectly reproaches them with bringing upon themselves, by their own fault, many calamities.

And I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth. By these words he promises a return to their native country, and a safe habitation in it. We know that Judea was situated on a lofty place above the neighbouring countries; while the situation of Babylon was much lower, so that the people trembled as if they had been shut up in a cave. He next tells more plainly what he meant by the

word *ride*;[1] for he promises the possession of that country which had been promised and given to the fathers,[2] and which they at that time enjoyed, and of which they were afterwards deprived for a time.

For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. He added this, that they might know, beyond all controversy, that all these things were true; and this must be viewed as referring not only to those promises, but likewise to the beginning of the chapter. For he rebuked hypocrites, who thought that they were defending themselves in a just cause, and shewed that they were suffering the just punishment of their sins; and that it was in vain to contend with God, and to bring forward in opposition to him their own works, which were altogether empty and worthless. On that account he brings them back to the true observation of the Sabbath, and shews that it will be well with them, if they shall worship God in a right manner. At length he concludes that they have not to deal with a mortal man, but that he who pronounces these things is God the Judge.

CHAPTER LIX.

1. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

1. Ecce non est mutilata manus Iehovæ, quin servet; neque aggravata auris ejus, quin audiat.

2. But your iniquities have sepa-

2. Sed iniquitates vestræ dissidium

[1] "The word *ride* is borrowed from a powerful conqueror, who, riding on a horse or in a chariot, while carrying on battle, seizes mountains, hills, citadels, castles, fortifications, and subjects them to his dominion. By 'high places of the earth,' he means what I have just now enumerated, lofty places difficult of ascent, on which citadels and fortresses are commonly situated, and the storming and seizing of which brings applause to the conqueror. See Deut. xxxii. 13."—*Vitringa.* "The whole phrase is descriptive, not of a mere return to Palestine, the highest of all lands (Kimchi), nor of more security from enemies by being placed beyond their reach (Vitringa), but of conquest and triumphant possession, as in Deut. xxxii. 13, from which the expression is derived by all the later writers who employ it."—*Alexander.*

[2] "To eat the heritage is to enjoy it, and derive subsistence from it. Kimchi correctly says that it is called the heritage of Jacob, as distinct from that of Ishmael and Esau, although equally descended from the father of the faithful."—*Alexander.*

rated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

3. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

4. None calleth for justice, nor *any* pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

5. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

6. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works *are* works of iniquity, and the act of violence *is* in their hands.

7. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction *are* in their paths.

8. The way of peace they know not; and *there is* no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

9. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, *but* we walk in darkness.

10. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes: we stumble at noon-day as in the night; *we are* in desolate places as dead *men*.

11. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but *there is* none; for salvation, *but* it is far off from us.

12. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions *are* with us; and *as for* our iniquities, we know them;

fecerunt inter vos et Deum vestrum; et peccata vestra operuerunt faciem ejus a vobis, ne audiat.

3. Nam manus vestræ pollutæ sunt sanguine, et digiti vestri iniquitate; labia vestra protulerunt mendacium; lingua vestra iniquitatem loquuta est.

4. Nemo est qui clamet pro justitia, nemo qui disceptet pro veritate; confidunt rebus vanis; loquuntur inania, concipiunt molestiam, pariunt iniquitatem.

5. Ova reguli excludunt, et telas aranearum texunt; qui comederit ex ovis eorum morietur; si comprimantur, exibit vipera.

6. Telæ eorum non erunt in vestimentum; neque se tegent eorum operibus. Nam opera eorum sunt opera iniquitatis (*aut, vanitatis*); et opus violentiæ in manibus eorum.

7. Pedes eorum ad malum currunt, et properant ad fundendum sanguinem innoxium; cogitationes eorum cogitationes vanæ (*vel iniquitatis*); vastitas et contritio in viis eorum.

8. Viam pacis non noverunt; nec judicium est in gressibus eorum; semitas suas perverterunt sibi; quisquis graditur per eas nesciet pacem.

9. Propterea longe recessit a nobis judicium; nec apprehendit nos justitia. Expectavimus lucem, et ecce tenebræ; splendorem, et ecce in caligine versamur.

10. Palpamus sicut cæci parietem; sicuti qui oculis capti sunt, palpamus. Impingimus in meridie tanquam noctu; in locis solitariis tanquam mortui.

11. Nos omnes quasi ursi vociferamur; et quasi columbæ susurrando susurramus. Expectavimus judicium, et non apparet; salutem, et longè stetit a nobis.

12. Quoniam multiplicatæ sunt iniquitates nostræ coram te, et peccata nostra testata sunt contra nos, (*vel, respondent nobis.*) Quoniam iniquitates nostræ nobiscum sunt, et peccata nostra cognoscimus.

13. In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

13. Iniquè egimus, et mentiti sumus Iehovæ, et abducti sumus a tergo Dei nostri, loquentes calumniam et defectionem; concipientes et proferentes ex corde verba mendacii.

14. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

14. Et actum est retrorsum judicium; et justitia procul stetit. Quoniam corruit in platea veritas, et æquitas non potuit prodire.

15. Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw *it*, and it displeased him that *there was* no judgment.

15. Defecit, inquam, veritas; et qui recessit a malo prædæ fuit expositus. Et vidit Iehova, ac displicuit oculis ejus, quòd non esset judicium.

16. And he saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

16. Vidit, inquam, quòd non esset vir; et admiratus est quòd nemo intercederet (*vel, occurreret*). Itaque salutem ei attulit (*vel, salutem illi fecit*) brachium suum; et justitia ejus, ipsa stabilivit eum.

17. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance *for* clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

17. Et induit justitiam, sicut loricam; et galeam salutis capiti suo. Induit, inquam, ultionem quasi vestem, et indignatione amictus fuit vice pallii.

18. According to *their* deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence.

18. Quasi propter retributiones, quasi ad reddendam vindictam, hostibus suis indignationem, vicem inimicis suis, insulis vicem reddet.

19. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun: when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

19. Proinde timebunt ab occidente nomen Iehovæ, et ab ortu solis gloriam ejus; quia veniet quasi flumen hostis, et Spiritus Iehovæ impellet (*vel, fugabit eum*).

20. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.

20. Et veniet Sioni redemptor, et iis qui redierint ab iniquitate in Iacob, dicit Iehova.

21. As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

21. Et ego cum ipsis hoc fœdus meum (sancio), dicit Iehova. Spiritus meus, qui super te est, et verba mea, quæ posui in ore tuo, non recedent ex ore tuo, neque ex ore seminis tui, neque ex ore seminis seminis tui, dicit Iehova, ab hoc tempore usque in æternum.

1. *Behold, the hand of Jehovah is not shortened.* This discourse closely resembles the preceding one; for, after having

torn off the mask from hypocrites, who vainly boasted of themselves, and after having shewn that the punishment inflicted on them was just, he now replies to other objections. Hypocrites are wont to accuse God either of weakness or of excessive severity. He shews, therefore, that he does not want either power or will to save his people, but that he is prevented by their wickedness from exercising his kindness towards them; and therefore that they do wrong in blaming God, and in uttering those slanders against him, when they ought, on the contrary, to accuse themselves.

The word הֵן, (*hēn,*) "behold," is emphatic, as if the Prophet spoke of something actually present, and pointed it out with the finger, for the sake of expressing certainty, in order to cut off a handle from hypocrites, that they might no longer practise evasion. We must also supply the contrasts to the words "shortened" and "benumbed;" as if he had said, that formerly there were abundant resources in the hand of God to render assistance to his people, and that he always was ready to be reconciled and lent a willing ear to prayers, and that now he is not unlike himself,[1] as if either his hand were broken or his ears grown dull, so that he did not hear distinctly.

2. *But your iniquities have made a separation.* The amount of what is said is, that they cannot say that God has changed, as if he had swerved from his natural disposition, but that the whole blame lies with themselves; because by their own sins they, in some measure, prevent his kindness, and refuse to receive his assistance. Hence we infer that our sins alone deprive us of the grace of God, and cause separation between us and him; for what the Prophet testifies as to the men of his time is applicable to all ages; since he pleads the cause of God against the slanders of wicked men. Thus God is always like himself, and is not wearied in doing good; and his power is not diminished, but we hinder the entrance of his grace.

It will be objected, that men cannot anticipate God by deserving well of him, and that consequently he must do good to those who are unworthy. I reply, this is undoubtedly

[1] "Il n'a point changé de nature." "He has not changed his nature."

true; but sometimes the frowardness of men grows to such an extent as to shut the door against God's benefits, as if they purposely intended to drive him far away from them. And although he listens to no man without pardoning him, as we always bring before him supplication for the removal of guilt, yet he does not listen to the prayers of the wicked. We need not wonder, therefore, if the Prophet accuse the people of rejecting God's benefits by their iniquities, and rendering him irreconcilable by their obstinacy, and, in a word, of making a divorce, which drives away or turns aside the ordinary course of grace.

3. *For your hands.* He now brings forward their actions, that they may not practise evasion, or call in question what are those sins which have "caused the separation." He therefore takes away from them every excuse, by bringing forward particular instances, as if their shameful life were exhibited on an open stage. Now, he speaks in the second person, because, like an advocate, he argues and pleads the cause of God, and therefore speaks of himself as not belonging to the rank of the wicked, with whom he did not wish to be classed, though he was not entirely free from sin, but feared and served God, and enjoyed liberty of conscience. No man could be at liberty to condemn others, who was involved in the guilt of the same vices; and no man could be qualified for pleading the cause of God, who deprived himself of his right by living wickedly. We must be unlike those whom we reprove, if we do not wish to expose our doctrine to ridicule, and to be reckoned impudent; and, on the other hand, when we serve God with a pure conscience, our doctrine obtains weight and authority, and holds even adversaries to be more fully convicted.

Are polluted with blood. The picture which he gives of the wicked life of the people is not superfluous; for men seek various subterfuges, and cannot be reduced to a state of obedience, unless they have previously acknowledged their sins. By mentioning *blood*, he does not mean that murders have been everywhere committed; but by this word he describes the cruelty, extortions, violence, and enormities, which were perpetrated by hypocrites against the poor and

defenceless; for they had not to deal with robbers and assassins, but with the king and the nobles, who were highly respected and honoured. He calls them manslayers, because they cruelly harassed the innocent, and seized by force and violence the property of others; and so, immediately afterwards, he uses the word "iniquity" instead of "blood."

And your fingers with iniquity. Though he appears to extend the discourse farther, yet it is a repetition, or rather a reduplication, such as is frequently employed by Hebrew writers, accompanied by amplification; for he expresses more by "fingers" than by "hands;" as if he had said that not even the smallest part was free from unjust violence.[1]

Your lips have uttered falsehood. Next, he takes notice of one kind of wickedness, that is, when men deceive each other by tricks, or falsehood, or perjury; for that iniquity by which we wound our neighbours is most frequently defended either by cruelty as a body-guard, or by cheating and falsehood. Here the Prophet takes a rapid view of the second table, and, from the crimes which they commit against it, he shews that they are wicked and destitute of all fear of God; for cruelty and treachery, by which human society is infringed, proceed from contempt of God. Thus from "the hands," that is, from extortion and violence, he descends to falsehoods and deceitful practices, to perjuries and crafty devices, by which we take advantage of our neighbours.

4. *There is none that crieth for justice.* He means that there is not among them any study of what is right or proper, that no man opposes the acts of injustice which are committed by the strong on the weak; and that this leads to growing licentiousness, because all wink at it, and there is none who cares about undertaking the defence of justice. It is not enough that we abstain from violence, if we do not, as far as lies in our power, hinder it from being committed by others. And, indeed, whoever permits what he is able to hinder does in some sense command it; so that silence is a sort of consent.

None that contendeth for truth. This clause is of the

[1] "Que la moindre partie de leur corps est souillee d'extorsion." "That the smallest part of their body is tainted with extortion."

same import as the preceding one. Some take מִשְׁפָּט (*nĭsh-pāt*) in a passive sense, and suppose the Prophet's meaning to be, "None is rightly judged; for everything is full of corruptions, and yet nobody makes opposition." But the active signification is more appropriate; for these two statements are closely connected with each other, that "None crieth for justice" and "None defendeth truth or uprightness." The rendering given by some, "No man judgeth himself truly," is rather too harsh. But because this verb in Niphal is taken, in many passages, for "to contend,"[1] the whole passage appeared to run more freely thus: that "none comes forward to protect what is right, openly and loudly to defend justice, and to plead against the wicked." Yet it will perhaps be thought preferable to view the words "cry for justice" as referring to wretched persons who are unjustly harassed; as if he had said that they are dumb, because they would gain nothing by crying. But this would also be harsh.

If God condemns so severely those who pay no attention to the righteous causes of men, and do not aid such as are in difficulties, what shall become of us, if no zeal for defending the glory of God prompt us to rebuke iniquities? If we wink at the mockeries by which wicked men jeer at God's sacred doctrine and profane his name; if we pay no attention to the efforts which they make to destroy the Church of God, shall not our silence be justly condemned for treachery?[2] In a word, Isaiah says that good order falls into decay through our fault, if we do not, as far as we can, resist the wicked.

They trust in vain things. He next points out that this is extreme confusion, when no one rises up in defence of justice. When he says that they "trust in vain things," he means that they heap up perverse reliances, by means of which they bring upon themselves insensibility. This is the utmost verge of iniquity, when, by seeking flatteries on every hand, they willingly harden themselves to despise God; and by such allurements Satan caresses the reprobate, till he alto-

[1] "Pour debatre." "To debate."

[2] "De desloyauté et trahison." "For disloyalty and treason."

gether enchants them, so that, shaking off all fear of God, they not only despise sound counsels, but become haughty and fearless mockers. Since therefore foolhardiness drives us headlong, when we place false hopes in opposition to the judgment of God, the Prophet has good reason for representing, as a mark of desperate malice, this confidence under which cunning men shelter themselves; because the disease is manifestly incurable, when men who are openly wicked do not hesitate to flatter themselves, and, relying on their obstinate wickedness, think that they are at liberty to do whatever they please.

They talk idly. He adds that their conversation tells plainly what is the nature of their dispositions and morals; as the proverb says, that "the tongue is the image of the mind." Yet this clause may be explained in two ways; either that they speak nothing sincerely, but, by constant practice, their tongues are formed to deceive, or, that their wickedness breaks out into open boasting. For my own part, I prefer the latter of these expositions.

They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. These are elegant metaphors, by which he compares wicked men to women, who support the child in the womb, and afterwards give birth to it. Thus he says that the wicked, while they inwardly contrive their crimes, may be said to be pregnant till they bring forth in due time; that is, when they have found occasions and opportunities. "They conceive," he says, "purposes of mischief, that afterwards they may unjustly harass simple persons;" as if he had said, that they make preparation for their crimes by long meditation, and are always ready for any mischief; because they do not cease to search in every quarter for indirect methods of annoying those who are giving them no disturbance.

5. *They hatch the eggs of the basilisk.* The Prophet proceeds farther, comparing the Jews not only to women, but to venomous beasts; so as to make it more evident that everything that proceeds from them is destructive and deadly. First, then, he says, that "they hatch the eggs of the basilisk;" because, as a viper cannot lay an egg that is not venomous, so they are so inured to wickedness,

and so full of it, that they can throw out nothing but poison.[1]

And weave the webs of spiders. By "the webs of spiders" he means that they are so barren and destitute of anything good, that even by the appearance of virtues they deceive. By two marks he describes wicked men; first, that the works which they perform manifest their corrupt nature; secondly, that they are of no value whatever, and contribute nothing towards making them kind, amiable, charitable, and faithful to those with whom they have intercourse. I am aware that it is explained in a different manner by other commentators; namely, that the wicked, while they are contriving the destruction of others, ruin themselves, and, while they think that they are industrious, labour fruitlessly and to no purpose; that "they are snared in their own nets," (Psalm ix. 15,) and "fall into the pit which they had digged." (Psalm vii. 15.) But I am of opinion that the Prophet meant what I have now said; namely, that the wicked do mischief in all places, at all times, and in all transactions, and that they never do anything good; and that every person who has anything to do with them will find them to be venomous and destructive. Such is the import of what he says, that in their eggs there lurks a deadly venom, and that, if they are broken, a serpent will come out of them.

6. *Their webs shall not be for clothing.* He repeats and confirms the same statement, that everything that they attempt or undertake is always useless to mankind; because they purposely shrink from all acts of kindness. Now, it is an indication of a mind utterly abandoned, to devote themselves to evil deeds in such a manner, that no advantage of any kind can be expected from the life of him who desires to be barren and destitute of all justice. Others explain it, that they will toil unsuccessfully to acquire wealth and to rise to honour. But I consider the meaning to be more

[1] "These are (παροιμιώδη) proverbial expressions, and mean that bad men have taken destructive counsels, as if the eggs of serpents, which ought to be crushed by those who meet with them, were purposely hatched by some person, in order that poisonous animals might, in due time, be produced by them for the destruction of men."—*Rosenmüller.*

simple, that no man will "cover himself with their works," because in their texture there is nothing solid or durable.[1]

By various modes of expression he inculcates the same thing, in order to demonstrate that their works yield no advantage whatever. But we were born for this end, that we should yield assistance to our neighbours, and, in our turn, contribute something to the general good. Thus they are savage beasts, and ought not to be called men, who are only skilful to do mischief, and labour with all their might to avoid doing good. He immediately adds, without a figure, that they are given up, and, as it were, devoted to iniquity.

7. *Their feet run to evil.* In various ways he paints to us the picture of what may be called extreme wickedness; that is, when men, having shaken off and cast away from them the fear of God, throw themselves into every kind of wickedness, and break out into all cruelty, extortion, and outrage. He says that they *run*, because they are eager and hasten with excessive keenness to evil actions. Having formerly spoken of the "hands" and the "tongues," he likewise adds the feet, in order to shew that they are proficients[2] in every kind of villany, and that there is no part of their body that is entirely free from crime. Some are violent, but restrain their tongues.[3] Others resemble harpies, but are satisfied with the first prey that they meet with. But the Prophet says that his countrymen are swift of foot for committing robberies.[4]

Wasting and destruction are in their paths. He means that, wherever they go, they will resemble wild beasts, which seize and devour whatever they meet with, and leave nothing behind, so that, by their terrific onset, they drive away every kind of animals from venturing to approach to them. Pliny

[1] "Having introduced the spider's web, in connection with the serpent's egg, as an emblem of malignant and treacherous designs, he here repeats the first, but for another purpose, namely, to suggest the idea of futility and worthlessness. This application may have been suggested by the frequent reference to webs and weaving as conducive to the comfort and emolument of men; but spiders' webs can answer no such purpose. The idea that it is not fit or cannot be applied to this end, although not exclusively expressed, is really included in the general declaration that they *shall not* be so used."—*Alexander.*

[2] "Maistres passez." "Acknowledged masters."

[3] "Mais c'est sans parler." "But it is without speaking."

[4] "Pour piller et brigander." "For thieving and highway-robbery."

makes use of the same comparison, when speaking of Domitian, whose arrival was like that of a savage beast. The same thing happens with other violent men, whom all avoid as wild beasts. And in this manner their ways are rendered desolate and solitary, when none have any intercourse with them.

8. *The way of peace they know not.* Some give an ingenious interpretation of the word "peace" as meaning a "peaceful" conscience; because the wicked must endure continual agony. But the Prophet summons wicked men to judgment, in order to shew, by the transgression of the Second Table, that they have no sincerity and no kindness, and, in a word, that they are (ἀστόργους) without natural affection. He says that "they know not the way of peace;" because their cruelty deprives them of justice and equity, by which human society is maintained, the very food of which is mutual peace and kindness; for justice and integrity are nourished by peace. And if every person, with unbridled rage, rush on his neighbours and attack them, there is then open war; for harmony cannot be preserved among us, unless equity be observed by every individual.[1]

And judgment is not in their steps. What he had just before said is expressed more clearly by the word "Judgment;" as if he had said, that they excite terror wherever they go, because they lay aside all integrity.

Whosoever walketh by them. The last clause may be taken in various senses; either, "Whosoever walketh in them shall also be a stranger to peace," or, "He who falleth into the hands of the wicked shall find them to be savage and barbarous." Either of those meanings is admissible, and I do not think it worth while to dispute much about them. Thus, after having spoken in general terms, and after having shewn that it is not God who prevents the Jews from being prosperous, the Prophet descends to particulars, by which he explains more fully the manner in which they have

[1] "J. D. Michaelis and Umbreit go to opposite extremes in their interpretation of the first clause. The former makes the way of peace denote the way to happiness; the latter understands the clause to mean that they refuse all overtures of reconciliation. The obvious and simple meaning is, that their lives are not pacific but contentious."—*Alexander.*

become estranged from God, and have rendered themselves unworthy of his favour.

Here arises a difficulty; for Paul (Rom. iii. 17) quotes this passage for the purpose of condemning all mankind as being sinful and corrupted, and as having nothing good; while the Prophet appears to apply it especially to the men of his own time. But the answer is easy; for, while he expressly addresses the Jews, who thought that they were holier than other men, the Gentiles must also be included along with them. If it be objected that the Gentiles, while they live uprightly, "are a law to themselves," (Rom. ii. 14,) and that "uncircumcision is counted as circumcision," (Rom. ii. 26,) I reply that the Prophet represents God as complaining of all who have not been renewed by the Spirit of God. In this manner no man can be excepted, if he be viewed in his own nature; but the Prophet speaks of himself as not belonging to their number, because he had been regenerated and was guided by the Spirit of God.

Paul's quotation of this passage was therefore appropriate; because he intended to shew what sort of men they are whom God hath forsaken, and who are under the influence of their own nature. Although the depravity of men does not always break out into gross vice, and the Prophet's design is to rebuke a very corrupt age; yet whenever crimes become so prevalent, we may behold, as in a mirror, what a pool and how deep a pool of every evil thing is the nature of man. And yet this discourse was undoubtedly very distasteful to the Jews, who were puffed up with vain glorying of the family from which they were descended; but since even they were not spared by the Spirit of God, there is no reason why other nations, who are not less sinful by nature, should wallow in their pleasures.

9. *Therefore is judgment far from us.* After having described how corrupt and depraved was the condition of that people, he likewise shews that the severe chastisements inflicted on them are richly deserved, that they may not complain of being treated with greater harshness and severity than was proper. Thus he has painted, as in a picture, those vices which were publicly known, that they might more fully

perceive in how many and how various ways they were guilty before God; and now he again repeats that we need not wonder if God treat such obstinate dispositions with greater severity, and render to them a just reward. He says that "Judgment is far off, because they were the most wretched of all men, and had not God for their protector as formerly."

And justice doth not overtake us. He employs the words "judgment" and "justice" as denoting God's guardianship, when he defends us, and shews that he takes care of us. He calls it "justice" when he defends us, and "judgment" when he revenges the injuries done to us. Here he declares that God had cast away the care of his people, and had deprived them of his countenance and aid, because they were unworthy of it; and hence we ought to observe the particle עַל כֵּן, (*gnăl kēn,*) "therefore;" for he draws the conclusion that we ought not to blame God, as if he acted unjustly towards his people, since in so many ways they had insulted his majesty.

Of the same import is what he adds, that while *they look for light,* continual darkness sits down upon them; for the metaphor shews that they were almost consumed by their calamities, and that, when they promised to themselves any alleviation, they were disappointed of their hope. *Light* is a word very frequently employed to denote prosperity, and *darkness* to denote adversity. He means, therefore, that it will be vain to expect that their condition shall be changed for the better; and his object is, that the people may learn to ascribe their calamities to themselves, and may not imagine that those calamities happen by chance, or that the Lord is excessively severe; for he always endeavours to bring his people to the doctrine of repentance.

10. *We grope for the wall like the blind.* He explains the same thing by different forms of expression; for, in consequence of the grievous complaints which were heard among the people, he determined to omit nothing that was fitted to describe their calamities. It is perhaps by way of concession[1]

[1] "Comme s'il accordoit qu'elles fussent vrayes." "As if he admitted that they were true."

that he mentions these things; as if he had said, "Our affairs are reduced to the deepest misery, but we ought chiefly to consider the cause, for we have deserved all this and far worse." But it is not a probable interpretation, that stupid persons are aroused to think of their evil actions; for, although they are abundantly disposed to complain, yet the devil stupifies them, so that the tokens of God's anger do not awaken them to repentance. He alludes to that metaphor which he employed in the preceding verse, when he said that the people were in darkness and obscurity, and found no escape; and his meaning is, that they are destitute of counsel, and overwhelmed by so deep anguish that they have no solace or refuge. When a lighter evil presses upon us, we look around and hope to find some means of escape; but when we are overpowered by heavier distresses, despair takes from us all ability to see or to judge. For this reason the Prophet says that they have been thrown into a labyrinth, and are "groping."

We stumble. The same thing is expressed, and even in a still more aggravated form, by this mode of expression, that, if they stir a foot, various stumblingblocks meet them on every hand, and, indeed, that there is no alleviation to their distresses, as if day had been changed into night.

In solitary places as dead men. By "solitary places" I understand either gulfs or ruinous and barren regions; for in this passage I willingly follow the version of Jerome, who derives the word אֲשְׁמַנִּים (*ăshmănnīm*) from אָשַׁם, (*āshăm,*) "to be desolate." The Jews, who choose to derive it from שָׁמַן, (*shāmăn,*) "to be fat," appear to me to argue idly, and to have no solid ground for their opinion. They think that it denotes men, because שֶׁמֶן (*shĕmĕn*) denotes "ointment," and say that this word is used for describing the Gentiles. But the true meaning of the Prophet is, that the Jews have been reduced to a wilderness, so that, shut out from the society of men, they resemble the dead, and have no hope of escape.

11. *We all roar like bears.* He describes two classes of those who cannot silently endure their afflictions without making them known by external signs; for some howl

fiercely, and others *moan like doves.* This latter metaphor was employed by him in describing the groans of Hezekiah, (Is. xxxviii. 14;) and this happens when we endeavour to restrain our grief, and yet cannot prevent the outward signs of grief from breaking out in spite of us. The meaning is, that sometimes the violence of their grief constrained them to utter loud cries, and sometimes they complained in low and murmuring sounds, but in both cases without avail, because their condition was not changed for the better.

We looked for judgment. He again repeats that in vain they "looked for judgment and salvation," meaning that the people were deprived of the assistance of God, which he desired above all things; and he makes use of the word *salvation,* in order to describe more fully and completely what he formerly denoted by the word "justice," and now again by the word "judgment." Thence infer that it is by our own fault that we are wretched, and grow old and waste away in our wretchedness, till we are converted to God. We may indeed moan and howl, but can obtain no alleviation of our grief without repentance. There can be no end of our afflictions, so long as we provoke the Lord's wrath, and do not desire with the whole heart to be reconciled to him.

12. *For our iniquities are multiplied before thee.* He confirms what he formerly said, namely, that the people act unjustly in accusing God of cruelty, and in not understanding that they are justly punished for their iniquities, the huge mass of which towers up to heaven; and in this sense the Prophet says that they "are multiplied." There is also much weight in the phrase "before thee;" for the Prophet descends into himself, and acknowledges the righteous judgment of God, which was hidden from men. Thus he intended to point out an implied contrast between the judgment of God and the judgment of men, who flatter themselves, and do not consider their sins; but God, who is a just judge, does not the less on that account reprove them, or pay any attention to the frivolous excuses under which they endeavour to shelter themselves. For this reason he does not reckon it enough simply to condemn the people, but says that they have "multiplied" their sins, that is, in many

respects they are guilty before God. He acknowledges, therefore, that the Lord is righteous, and performs the part of an excellent judge; since nothing good or right is found among men; and therefore he adds,—

Our sins have testified against us, (or, *answer*[1] *to us.*) Witnesses are not summoned, or brought from heaven; but the Jews are rebuked and condemned by the testimony of conscience. That mode of expression ought to be carefully observed; for it shews that God does not need many proofs, since our sins hold us to be sufficiently convicted. We must not, therefore, strive with God, as if he punished us unjustly, or chastised us too severely; for our sins openly proclaim what we are, and God does not need additional proofs.

For our iniquities are with us. Instead of "with us," some render אִתָּנוּ, (*ittānū,*) "upon us;" but I choose rather to adhere to the strict meaning of the word.[2] Men practise evasions, and assume various shapes, in order to appear righteous; but in vain, for they carry with them their iniquities, from which they cannot extricate themselves; as God, in condemning Cain, (Gen. iv. 7,) declares that "sin keepeth watch before the door;" so that any one who despises the judgment of God shall in vain attempt to escape by his rebellion.

And we know our sins. When he says that the Jews "know their sins," he does not mean that their hearts are truly affected by them, for in that case repentance follows; but he declares that, although they desire to escape the judgment of God, the testimony of their own conscience binds and holds them fast, so that it is vain for them to cavil or seek an excuse. He speaks in the first person, as if he were one of the great body of the people. This is very customary; but at the same time he shews that this evil pre-

[1] "A witness interrogated by a judge, or even speaking of his own accord, is said, עָנָה, (*ynānāh,*) 'to answer.' The same form of expression occurs in Is. iii. 9; Jer. xiv. 7; Hos. vii. 10."—*Rosenmüller.*

[2] "Lowth translates אִתָּנוּ, (*ittānū,*) 'cleave fast unto us;' but interpreters generally prefer the sense expressed in the English Version, (they are with us, that is, in our sight, or present to our memory.)"—*Alexander.* "Our sins are well known to us."—*Doederlein.*

vails through the whole body to such an extent that not one member is whole or sound; and, although he may plead his own cause before God, yet, because iniquity is diffused through every part of the body, he acknowledges that he is one of the diseased members, and is infected by the general contagion. Nor is there any contradiction in having formerly spoken of himself as not sharing the general guilt, and now laying aside all distinction, and including himself along with others.

13. *We have done wickedly.* Here he enumerates certain classes of sins, in order to arouse the people more keenly to an acknowledgment of their sin. It must be regarded as monstrous, that men, who have been chastised and almost crushed by the hand of God, are still proud, and so obstinate that they cannot bend or be humbled by a conviction of their sin. The Lord endeavours to soften our obduracy by stripes and wounds; but when chastisements do us no good, our case must be given up as hopeless. Isaiah therefore labours to shew how wretched is the condition of the people, who, while they endured severe hardships, yet murmured against God, and did not suffer themselves to be brought into a state of obedience. And therefore he frequently repeats this warning, and reproves sharply, in order to subdue this obstinacy of the people.

And we have lied to Jehovah. By a variety of terms he rebukes their vices, and enumerates classes of them, after having pointed out in a general manner that corruption which everywhere prevailed. Nor does he mention only slight faults, or those of a small number of persons, but a universal revolt. By these words he pronounces them to have been so deeply corrupted, that no sincerity, uprightness, fear, or conscience remained in them. For what is meant by "lying to God," but to revolt treacherously from him, as if all obedience were refused? Thus he does not reproach them with one or a few transgressions of the Law, but says that, like fugitives, they have forsaken God, so that they do not follow him when he calls.

Conceiving and uttering from the heart. He now adds that they were devoted to the invention of mischief, and

thoroughly imbued with falsehood; for "to utter a lie from the heart," is far worse than to tell lies thoughtlessly, or even to deceive when an occasion presents itself.[1] Nor is there any room to doubt that those reproofs grievously offended the Jews, who, puffed up with pride, imagined that they were exceedingly holy. But it was proper to treat their hypocrisy in this manner, because mere doctrine produced little effect upon them. Taught by this example, pastors, when they see the Church of God corrupt, and men pleasing themselves and flattering their vices, ought to make strenuous opposition, accompanied by loud and sharp reproof.

14. *And judgment is driven back.* It is a mistake to suppose that the Prophet returns to his earliest subject, (Is. i. 5,) and speaks of the punishments which the people had suffered at the hand of God; for he still proceeds with the preceding narrative, and explains the diseases under which the people laboured, that they may see clearly that they are justly punished. But we must distinguish this verse from the ninth, in which he said that "judgment had gone back;" for there he declared that they were deprived of God's assistance, because they did not deserve to have him as the defender of their cause; but here he says that "judgment is driven back" in a different sense, that is, because they have overthrown all justice and equity among themselves. They have therefore received a just reward, because no justice of God has shone forth to render assistance, when they have banished far from them justice and equity; for in vain do we expect from God what we have refused to others and cast away from ourselves.

In the street. That is, in a public place. He describes those places in which judicial sentences were pronounced. When he says that "truth is fallen in the street," he means that not only some private individuals have been corrupted, but the whole condition of the people is so thoroughly depraved as to leave no part sound; for, if some vices reign among the common people, some remedy may be obtained,

[1] "What they think in their heart, and utter from the thought to speech and to action, that is, their thoughts, and words, and actions, are falsehoods."—*Kimchi.*

so long as there is room for judgment; but if judgments are overthrown or corrupted, it follows that all things are infected by a universal contagion. He describes also their unbridled licentiousness, in not being ashamed of conduct openly wicked, and in not shrinking from the light and from the eyes of men.

15. *Truth faileth.* Hence it clearly appears that Isaiah, in the preceding verse, did not speak of punishments; for, without interrupting the stream of his discourse, he proceeds to shew that the people ought not to complain of the severity of chastisements, since they have so grievously offended and provoked God. He therefore confirms what he formerly said, that "truth hath fallen, that there is no place for equity;" and he enlarges this statement the more, by adding that *he who hath withdrawn from evil hath become a prey.*[1] Almost all the Jewish expositors, reading the two clauses consecutively, explain them thus:—"Truth hath failed, and, by departing from evil, hath been made a prey." Why they adopt that meaning, I do not see.

Jerome's exposition, which I follow, is much more correct and appropriate; and a similar mode of expression is frequently employed in the Scriptures. Job is said to have been "an upright and perfect man, fearing God, and departing from evil." (Job i. 1.) Solomon also says, "The fool is confident, but the righteous man looketh well to himself, and departeth from evil." (Prov. xiv. 16.) The Prophet means that all uprightness was so greatly abhorred, that the true worshippers of God, if any remained, were not permitted to be safe. As if he had said, "Whoever wishes to live among men must vie with them in wickedness,"[2] according to the common proverb, "Among wolves we must howl; but he who wishes to live innocently shall be torn in pieces, as a sheep is torn by wolves." Finally, he describes the utmost pitch of wickedness; for he shews that "truth hath failed,"

[1] "If you render the Hebrew words thus, 'Withdrawing from evil, he maketh himself a prey,' that is, 'Whosoever shuns vices, exposes himself as a prey to the wicked,' you will have a meaning which leaves nothing to desire."—*Rosenmüller.*

[2] "Doit necessairement estre aussi mechant qu'eux." "Must unavoidably be as wicked as they are."

so that no good man is allowed to remain among them; because every one that abstains from acts of injustice "lays himself open to be a prey."

And Jehovah saw. This relates to the consolation of the people; for he declares that, although they have grievously offended, so that it may appear as if there were no room for pardon, still the Lord will have regard to his people, and, although he has inflicted very severe chastisements, will at length remember his covenant, so as to bring incredible relief by healing their wounds. He speaks here of a future period, and promises that one day, after calamities so numerous and diversified, the Lord will aid the people that are left; for the Jews would have lost heart, and would have been altogether discouraged, if the Lord had not brought that consolation.

Thus men commonly rush forward, and throw themselves headlong into opposite vices; for, when they are reproved, they either grow obstinate and harden themselves, or are terrified and fall into despair. We must therefore observe carefully this order which the Prophet followed. First, it was necessary to reprove the Jews, that, being affected and laid low by repentance, they might cease to find fault with God; and, secondly, a mitigation of punishments, accompanied by salvation, is promised, that they might not be discouraged, but expect assistance from the Lord, who is unwilling that his Church should perish, and punishes his people for a time, in order that he may not suffer them to be ruined and destroyed.

Yet if any one prefer to limit this dislike or displeasure of God to the "judgment," because he had good reason for abhorring a wicked people, I have no objection; as if he had said that God saw nothing in that people but what was ground of hatred. Hence it follows, that there was no other motive that prompted him to yield assistance, than because their affairs were utterly desperate.

16. *He saw that there was no man.* Isaiah continues the same subject, but expresses more, and relates more fully what he had briefly noticed; for what he said in the preceding verse, that "it displeased the Lord that there was no

judgment," might have been obscure. In this passage he repeats that the Lord saw that "there was no man"[1] to render assistance to the Church, and that *he wondered.* He makes use of the verb וישתומם (*yĭshtōmēm*) in the Hithpahel conjugation,[2] for the purpose of denoting that the Lord was the cause of his own astonishment; as if he had said, "He made himself astonished."

He wondered that none came forward. Some think that מפגיע (*măphgīăng*) means an intercessor; but I think that the meaning is this, that there was none who endeavoured to relieve their affliction, that there was no physician who applied his hand to this wound, and that for this reason God "wondered." The reason why he attributes to God this astonishment may be easily understood. By this rebuke he intended to put the Jews to shame, that they might not, according to their custom, resort to hypocritical pretences for concealing their sins; and, because it was incredible and monstrous that there was not found in a holy and elect people any one that opposed injustice, he represents God as astonished at such a novelty, that the Jews may at length be ashamed and repent. Was it possible that there could be greater obstinacy of which they ought to be ashamed, since by their wickedness they moved God to astonishment?

At the same time he rebukes their hypocrisy, if they pretend to have eminent piety and holiness, when God, after a diligent search, did not find even one upright man. He likewise praises and magnifies the unspeakable mercy of God, in condescending to rescue, as if from the depths of hell, a people whose condition was so desperate; for the Jews were undoubtedly reminded by these words in what

[1] "And now, when God repents on account of the evil which he has brought on the people, he sees that there is not a righteous man to stand in the gap. (Ezek. xxii. 30.)"—*Jarchi.* "Rosenmüller, Umbreit, and others, follow Jarchi in supposing איש (*ĭsh*) to be emphatic and to signify a man of the right sort, a man equal to the occasion. This explanation derives some colour from the analogy of Jer. v. 1; but even there, and still more here, the strength of the expression is increased rather than diminished by taking this phrase in the simple sense of *nobody.* What was wanted was not merely a qualified man, but any man whatever, to maintain the cause of Israel and Jehovah."—*Alexander.*

[2] "The verb וישתומם (*yĭshtōmēm*) denotes a man who [illegible] and wonders, and remains silent through his wonder."—*Jarchi.*

manner they ought to hope for redemption; namely, because God is pleased to rise up miraculously to save what was lost. Besides, by the word "wonder" he describes also God's fatherly care. It is certain that God is not liable to those passions, so as to wonder at anything as new or uncommon; but he accommodates himself to us, in order that, being deeply moved by a conviction of our evils, we may view our condition with horror. Thus, when he says that "the Lord saw," he means that there is no help in our own industry; when he says that the Lord "wonders," he means that we are excessively dull and stupid, because we neither perceive nor care for the evils of our condition; and yet that our indifference does not prevent the Lord from rendering assistance to his Church.

Therefore his arm brought (or, *made*) *salvation to him.* By these words he means that we ought not to despair, although we receive no assistance from men. Yet, reducing to nothing every other assistance, he pronounces the salvation of his own nation, and consequently of all mankind, to be owing, from first to last, to God's undeserved goodness and absolute power. Thus, in like manner as, by asserting that God is abundantly sufficient for himself, and has power and strength sufficient to redeem the Jews, he stretches out his hand to the feeble; so, by saying that men can do nothing to promote their salvation, he abases all pride, that, being stripped of confidence in their works, they may approach to God. And we must observe this design of the Prophet; for, in reading the Prophets and Apostles, we must not merely consider what they say, but for what purpose, and with what design. Here, therefore, we ought chiefly to observe the design of the Prophet, that in God alone is there sufficient power for accomplishing our salvation, that we may not look hither and thither; for we are too much disposed to lean on external aids; but that we ought to place the hope of salvation nowhere else than on the arm of God, and that the true foundation of the Church is in his righteousness, and that they do wrong who depend on anything else; since God has borrowed nothing from any but himself.

The usefulness of this doctrine is still more extensive; for, although all remedies often fail us, yet the Lord will find sufficient assistance in his own arm. Whenever, therefore, we are destitute of men's assistance, and are overwhelmed by calamities of every kind, and see nothing before us but ruin, let us betake ourselves to this doctrine, and let us rest assured that God is sufficiently powerful to defend us; and, since he has no need of the assistance of others, let us learn to rely firmly and confidently on his aid.

Yet we must keep in remembrance the universal doctrine, namely, that the redemption of the Church is a wonderful blessing bestowed by God alone, that we may not ascribe anything to the strength or industry of men. With abhorrence we ought to regard the pride of those who claim for themselves any part of that praise which belongs to God, since in him alone is found both the cause and the effect of our salvation.

And his righteousness, it upheld him. Here *arm* denotes power and strength, and *righteousness* denotes the integrity which he displays in procuring the salvation of his people, when he is their protector, and delivers them from destruction.[1] When he says that "the arm of God brought to him salvation," this must not be limited to God, and ought not to be taken passively, as if God saved himself, but actively; so that this salvation refers to the Church, which he has delivered from the hands of enemies.

17. *And he put on righteousness as a coat of mail.* Here he equips God with his armour, for the purpose both of confirming more and more the confidence of believers, and of stripping all men of all confidence in their own strength. The meaning of the verse amounts to this, that God is in want of nothing for discomfiting his enemies and gaining the victory; because from his righteousness, power, and grace, and from his ardent love of his people, he will make for himself (*πανοπλίαν*) complete armour. And this is again worthy of remark; for, although we acknowledge that God is sufficiently powerful, yet we are not satisfied with it, but at the same time seek other help. Thus our minds are

[1] "De mort." "From death."

always inclined to unbelief, so that they fasten on inferior means, and are greatly entangled by them.

In order to correct this vice, Isaiah presents this lively description; as if he had said, "Know ye that God has in his hand all the safeguards of your salvation, and will be in want of nothing to deliver you in spite of enemies and bring you back to your native country; and therefore there is no reason why you should tremble." Besides, there is nothing to which we are more prone than to imagine that we bestow something on God, and thus to claim for ourselves some part of the praise which ought to remain undivided with him.

When he clothes God *with vengeance, and with indignation as a cloak*, this relates to enemies, against whom God is said to be enraged for the sake of his people; and thus, the more that Satan labours and makes every effort against us, so much the more does God kindle with zeal, and so much the more powerfully does he rise up, to render assistance to us. Although, therefore, Satan and all the reprobate do not rest, but raise up obstacles of every kind to prevent our salvation, and even exert themselves furiously to destroy us, yet, by his power alone, God will defeat all their efforts.

18. *As if on account of recompenses.* He confirms the statement of the preceding verse; for he shews what will be the nature of that vengeance with which he had clothed the Lord; namely, that he is prepared to render recompense to his enemies. We must attend to the reason why the Prophet describes the Lord as thus armed, indignant, and ready for vengeance. It is, because the salvation of the Church is connected with the destruction of the wicked; and therefore God must be armed against the enemies who wish to destroy us.

Hence we see God's infinite love toward us, who loves us so ardently that he bears hostility to our enemies, and declares that he will render recompense to them. So strong is his affection to his little flock, that he sets a higher value on them than on the whole world. This is the reason why he says that *he will render recompense to the islands*, that is,

to countries beyond the sea and far off; for, in order to deliver his people, he overthrew monarchies that were powerful, and that appeared to be invincible. But, although here he mentions none but mortal men, still we must begin with Satan, who is their head.

19. *Therefore they shall fear the name of Jehovah.* He now testifies that this work of redemption shall be so splendid and illustrious, that the whole world shall wonder, behold, praise, and celebrate, and, struck with fear, shall render glory to God. It is uncertain whether he means the conversion of the Gentiles, or the terror with which God dismays his enemies. For my own part, I am more inclined to the former opinion, that, even to the utmost boundaries of the earth, the name of God shall be revered and honoured, so that the Gentiles shall not only tremble, but shall serve and adore him with true repentance.

For[1] *the enemy shall come as a river.* As to the reason now assigned, commentators differ. But the true meaning, in my opinion, is, that the attack of the enemy shall be so furious that, like a rapid and impetuous torrent, it shall appear to sweep away and destroy everything, but that the Lord shall cause it instantly to subside and disappear. It is therefore intended to heighten the description of the divine power, by which the vast strength and dreadful fury of the enemies are repelled, receive a different direction, and fall to pieces.

A question now arises, "What redemption does the Prophet mean?" I reply, as I have already suggested on another passage, that these promises ought not to be limited, as is commonly done, to a single redemption; for the Jews refer it exclusively to the deliverance from Babylon, while Christians refer it to Christ alone. For my part, I join both, so as to include the whole period after the return of the people along with that which followed down to the

[1] "Whether כִּי (*kī*) be rendered *when* or *for*, the sense remains essentially the same, because the one implies the other. The only weighty reasons for preferring the latter are, first, its natural priority as being the usual and proper sense, and then the simplicity of structure which results from it as being more accordant with the genius and usage of the language." —*Alexander*.

coming of Christ; for this prophecy was not fulfilled but in Christ, and what is said here cannot apply to any other. Never was the glory of God revealed to the whole world, nor were his enemies put to flight so as not to recover their strength, till Christ achieved a conquest and illustrious triumph over Satan, sin, and death.

20. *And a Redeemer shall come to Zion.* He again confirms what he formerly said, that the people shall be delivered, and that God will be the author of this blessing. He bids the people, therefore, be of good cheer in their captivity, which shall not be perpetual; and next, he exhorts them to place the hope of redemption in God alone, that they may fix their minds solely on his promises. By the name *Zion* he denotes here, as in other passages, captives and exiles; for however far they had been banished from their country, still they must have carried the temple in their hearts.

And to them who have turned away from iniquity. That the bastard children of Abraham may not apply indiscriminately to themselves what he has just now said, he proceeds to shew to whom the redemption shall come, namely, to those only who have been truly consecrated to the Lord. It is certain that many returned from Babylon, who were not moved by any feeling of repentance, and yet who became partakers of the same blessing. But the Prophet speaks of the complete redemption which the elect alone enjoy; for, although the fruit of external redemption extends also to hypocrites, yet they have not embraced the blessing of God for salvation. The design of the Prophet is, to shew that the punishment of banishment will be advantageous, that God may gather his Church, after having purified it from filth and pollution; for we must always bear in remembrance what we saw elsewhere as to the diminution of the people.

In this way the Prophet exhorts the elect to the fear of God, that they may profit by his chastisements. Hence infer, that we cannot be reconciled to God through the blood of Christ, unless we first repent of our sins; not that salvation, which is founded on the pardon of sins, depends

on our repentance; but repentance is joined to it in such a manner that it cannot be separated. They whom the Lord receives into favour are renewed by his Spirit in such a manner as to abhor their vices and change their manner of life.

Papists overturn the whole doctrine of salvation, by mingling and confounding pardon of sin with repentance; and not only they, but others also who wish to be thought more acute.[1] They acknowledge that a man is justified by free grace through Christ, but add, that it is because we are renewed by him. Thus they make our justification to depend partly on the pardon of sins and partly on repentance. But in this way our consciences will never be pacified; for we are very far from being perfectly renewed. These things must, therefore, be distinguished, so as to be neither separated nor confounded; and thus our salvation will rest on a solid foundation.

Paul quotes this passage, (Rom. xi. 26,) in order to shew that there is still some remaining hope among the Jews; although from their unconquerable obstinacy it might be inferred that they were altogether cast off and doomed to eternal death. But because God is continually mindful of his covenant, and "his gifts and calling are without repentance," (Rom. xi. 29,) Paul justly concludes that it is impossible that there shall not at length be some remnant that come to Christ, and obtain that salvation which he has procured. Thus the Jews must at length be collected along with the Gentiles, that out of both "there may be one fold" under Christ. (John x. 16.) It is of the deliverance from Babylon, however, that the Prophet treats. This is undoubtedly true; but we have said that he likewise includes the kingdom of Christ, and spiritual redemption, to which this prediction relates. Hence we have said that Paul infers that he could not be the redeemer of the world, without belonging to some Jews, whose fathers he had chosen, and to whom this promise was directly addressed.

[1] "Et ce ne sont pas les ignorans seulement qui font cela, ains ceux qui veulent estre estimez les plus subtils entre eux." "And it is not ignorant persons only who do this, but those who wish to be reckoned the most ingenious among them."

Saith Jehovah. By these words, in the conclusion of the verse, he sets a seal to the excellent sentiment which he has expressed.

21. *And I make this my covenant with them.* Because it was difficult to believe what the Prophet has hitherto declared, therefore he endeavours, in various ways, to confirm the Jews, that they may rely with unshaken confidence on this promise of salvation, and may ascribe to God so much honour as to trust in his word. And we ought carefully to observe the word *covenant*, by which the Prophet points out the greatness and excellence of this promise; for the promises are more extensive, and may be regarded as the stones of the building, while the foundation of it is the covenant, which upholds the whole mass. He makes use of this word, therefore, that they might not think that it contained some matter of ordinary occurrence, and adds these confirmations, that, although the Lord did not immediately perform this, they might nevertheless expect it with firm and unshaken hope; and there appears to be an implied contrast, that believers may cheerfully look forward to the new covenant, which was to be established in the hand of Christ.

My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words. What is now added may be thought to be feeble and trivial, when he enjoins the Church to be satisfied with the "word" and "Spirit;" as if this were a great happiness, to hang in suspense on nothing but God's promises. Yet although the Prophet commends the value and excellence of doctrine, I have no doubt that still it is not separated from its effect. But because God regulates and dispenses his grace in such a manner, that, as long as believers remain in this world, he always trains them to patience, and does not in every instance answer their prayers, therefore he brings them back to doctrine; as if he had said, "Thou wilt indeed find that I am kind to thee in various ways; but there is no happiness which will be of greater importance to thee, or which thou oughtest to desire more earnestly, than to feel that I am present by 'the word' and 'the Spirit.'" Hence we infer that this is a most valuable treasure of the Church, that he has chosen for

himself a habitation in it, to dwell in the hearts of believers by his Spirit, and next to preserve among them the doctrine of his gospel.

Shall not depart out of thy mouth. Finally, he foretells that the Lord will never forsake his people, but will always be present with them by "his Spirit" and by "the word." The "Spirit" is joined with the word, because, without the efficacy of the Spirit, the preaching of the gospel would avail nothing, but would remain unfruitful. In like manner, "the word" must not be separated from "the Spirit," as fanatics imagine, who, despising the word, glory in the name of the Spirit, and swell with vain confidence in their own imaginations. It is the spirit of Satan that is separated from the word, to which the Spirit of God is continually joined. Now, when he quickens outward doctrine, so that it strikes root in our hearts, our condition is happy even amidst many afflictions; and I have no doubt that the Prophet expressly declares that, although God deals kindly with his Church, still its life and salvation shall be laid up in faith. Thus the new people is distinguished from the ancient people; for, as the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, so, since he has risen from the dead, believing souls must be raised up along with him. But now he promises that the Church will never be deprived of this invaluable blessing, but will be guided by the Holy Spirit and sustained by heavenly doctrine; for it would be of little avail that the gospel should once be offered to us, and that the Spirit should be given to us, if he did not dwell with us.

Which I have put in thy mouth. The Prophet shews that God addresses us in such a manner that he chooses to employ the ministry and agency of men. He might indeed speak from heaven or send angels; but he has consulted our advantage the more by addressing and exhorting us through men like ourselves, that, by their voice and word, he may more gently draw us to himself. This order has therefore been established by him in the Church, that it is vain for those who reject his ministers to boast that they are willing to obey God; and therefore he commands us to seek the word and doctrine from the mouth of prophets and teachers, who teach

in his name and by his authority, that we may not foolishly hunt after new revelations.

My words shall not depart. The phrase, "shall not depart," is rendered by some in the imperative mood, for which it is well known that the future tense is sometimes used. But here a command or exhortation is not appropriate; for the Prophet promises that which God intends to fulfil. An exhortation may indeed be drawn from it, but the priority is due to the promise, which is to this effect, that the Lord will assist his Church, and will take care of it, so as never to allow it to be deprived of doctrine. To this, therefore, we ought always to look, when we are tempted by adversity, and when everything does not succeed according to our wish; for we must be supported and upheld by the word and the Spirit, of which the Lord declares that we shall never be left destitute.

CHAPTER LX.

1. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

2. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

5. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba

1. Surge, splendida esto; quia venit splendor tuus, et gloria Iehovæ super te orta est.

2. Quia ecce tenebræ operient terram, et caligo populos; super te autem orietur Iehova, et gloria ejus super te videbitur.

3. Et ambulabunt gentes ad splendorem tuum, et reges ad fulgorem ortus tui.

4. Leva in circuitu oculos tuos, et vide. Omnes isti congregati sunt ut veniant ad te; filii tui à longè venient, filiæ tuæ ad latus nutrientur.

5. Tunc videbis, et splendesces, (*vel, diffluës,*) expavesces ac dilatabitur cor tuum; quia ad te conversa fuerit copia maris, (*vel, multitudo maris,*) opes gentium (*vel, robur gentium*) ad te venerint.

6. Copia camelorum operiet te, pulloruni Midian et Epha. Omnes è Saba venient, aurum et thus affe-

shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.

7. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

8. Who *are* these *that* fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

9. Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

10. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

11. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and *that* their kings *may be* brought.

12. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted.

13. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

14. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through *thee*, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

16. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the

rent, et laudes Iehovæ annuntiabunt.

7. Omnes oves Cedar congregabuntur tibi; arietes Nabaioth ministrabunt tibi; ascendent ad beneplacitum altaris mei; et domum gloriæ meæ glorificabo.

8. Qui sunt isti qui instar nubis volant, et quasi columbæ ad fenestras suas?

9. Me certè insulæ expectabunt, et naves Tharsis, ut filios tuos abducant à longe; argentum eorum et aurum cum ipsis, nomini Iehovæ Dei tui, et sancto Israel; quia glorificavit te.

10. Et extruent filii alienigenæ muros tuos, et reges eorum ministrabunt tibi; quoniam in ira mea percussi te, et in clementia mea misertus sum tui.

11. Et aperientur portæ tuæ jugiter; die et nocte non claudentur, ut advehantur tibi opes (*vel, robur*) gentium, et reges eorum ducti.

12. Quoniam gens et regnum quod non servierit tibi peribunt; gentes, inquam, penitus abolebuntur.

13. Gloria Libani ad te veniet, abies, pinus, et buxus pariter, ad decus loci sanctitatis meæ; nam locum pedum meorum glorificabo.

14. Et venient ad te humiles filii affligentium te, et incurvabunt se ad plantas pedum tuorum omnes qui te spernebant; et vocabunt te Civitatem Iehovæ, Sion Sancti Israel.

15. Pro eo quòd fuisti derelicta et exosa, ut nemo per te transiret, ponam te in magnificentiam perpetuam, gaudium generationis et generationis.

16. Et suges lac Gentium, mammillam regum suges; et cognosces

breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

17. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

18. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

21. Thy people also *shall be* all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

22. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

quòd ego Iehova, servator tuus, et redemptor tuus fortis Iacob.

17. Pro ære adducam aurum, et pro ferro adducam argentum, et pro ligno æs, et pro lapidibus ferrum; et ponam præfecturam tuam, pacem; et exactores tuos, justitiam.

18. Non audietur amplius oppressio in terra tua, vastitas et contritio in terminis tuis; et vocabis Salutem muros tuos, et portas tuas Laudem.

19. Nec erit tibi amplius sol in lucem dierum, nec splendor lunæ lucebit tibi; quia erit tibi Iehova in lucem perpetuam, et Deus tuus in gloriam tuam.

20. Non occidet amplius sol tuus, nec luna tua occultabitur; quoniam Iehova erit tibi in lucem perpetuam, et finientur dies luctus tui.

21. Populus quoque tuus omnes justi, perpetuò hæreditabunt terram, germen plantationis ejus, opus manuum mearum, ut glorificer.

22. Parvus erit in mille, exiguus in gentem robustam. Ego Iehova tempore ejus accelerabo hoc.

1. *Arise, be bright.* He now shews what is the efficacy of that word of which he formerly[1] spoke; for he raises up a prostrate and afflicted Church, and restores her to her brightness; and, because he represents the person of God, he now declares his authority. For this reason he employs the form of command, that the word spoken might be more efficacious; as if, in the exercise of absolute power, he put the Church in possession of that happier condition which he had promised. The amount of what is said is, that believers may know that he does not scatter his words in the air, but speaks with effect.

He bids her "arise," because he formerly told her to "lie down;" and these two words stand in contrast with each

[1] "Au chapitre precedent." "In the preceding chapter."

other. Of Babylon he formerly said, "Come down, sit in the dust." (Is. xlvii. 1.) Of the Jews themselves he said, "My people shall sit in the dust." On the other hand, he says, "Arise, arise, put on the garments of thy beauty." (Is. lii. 1.) Thus, by what may be called the stretching out of his hand, he lifts up the Church again, that she who had formerly been prostrated, and covered all over with filth and pollution, may regain her seat of honour.

For thy brightness is come. That the darkness of afflictions may not overwhelm the Jews with despair, he says that the light which had been hidden would soon afterwards arise, alluding to the alternation of day and night. As if he had said, "The Lord, having compassion upon thee, will rescue thee out of this darkness in which thou liest; thou hast been sufficiently punished; it is time that thy condition should begin to be improved." By the word *brightness*, therefore, he metaphorically denotes salvation and prosperity, as by "darkness" he formerly denoted a calamitous state of the Church.

The glory of Jehovah. He mentions at the same that this light will arise from no other quarter than from God's smiling countenance, when he shall be pleased to display his grace; for everything goes well when the Lord shines upon us by his light; and, when he turns away from us, nothing that can befall us is more wretched and unhappy.

2. *For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth.* He now exhibits in a stronger light, by means of comparison, that grace which he formerly mentioned; that we may form some idea how much God loves his elect, and how extraordinary is the privilege which he bestows upon them. The amount of what he says is, that, while we are weighed down by innumerable afflictions, and while the whole world, as it were, sinks under them, God will take care of his people, in order to enrich them with various benefits. He shews, therefore, that the light of grace and favour, which he mentioned, will not be indiscriminately enjoyed by all, but will be peculiar to the people of God.

We have said that the word "brightness" denotes a prosperous condition of the Church; but let us not judge of this

condition from outward appearance; for the Prophet rises higher, and I have no doubt that his discourse relates to spiritual light and brightness. Otherwise that mode of expression which he afterwards employs, "The Gentiles shall walk to thy brightness," (verse 3,) would not be appropriate. Besides, this is clearly demonstrated by the connection between this chapter and the preceding; for he says that this covenant is continued in the word and Spirit. Finally, from the contrast it may easily be inferred that the happiness promised to the Church is different from that which consists in meat and drink, or tranquillity and peace, and other conveniences; and indeed never afterwards was there any period in which the darkness of afflictions overwhelmed all the Gentiles, while the Jews enjoyed peace and prosperity. Since, therefore, the condition of the Church is separated from the whole world, that benefit which Isaiah puts into the possession of the Church is spiritual, and the brightness which he promises is spiritual; and consequently, these things relate to the spiritual kingdom of Christ, when the light of the Gospel shone in every part of the world, and foreign nations were enlightened by it. To this also relates what follows,—

The Lord will arise upon thee; for although he shews that the favour of God will be visible by manifest tokens and effects, yet he does not leave out that which is of the greatest importance, that believers will truly feel that he is their Father, so as to expect salvation from him. Hence infer that we are overwhelmed by darkness till God shine upon us with the testimony of adoption by free grace. I speak of all mankind; for Isaiah informs us that this life-giving light proceeds from God alone, in order to declare that it is a special gift of God.

Secondly, it ought to be observed that the Church alone, that is, the elect of God, are partakers of this brightness. Hence it follows, that it is not a common or natural gift, but a gift by which the Lord relieves us from an ordinary defect of human nature. Thus also we perceive that there is no light or brightness but in the Church; for the rest of men, though they think that they enjoy light and brightness, are overwhelmed by darkness, from which they cannot be

extricated in any other way than by the light of the Gospel.

And his glory shall be seen upon thee. He adds the word "glory," because, after having embraced us by his favour, the Lord continues more and more to increase his acts of kindness toward us.

3. *And the Gentiles shall walk.* He confirms what we have already said, that there is no other light of men but when the Lord shines on them by his word. All indeed acknowledge this; but they do not set so high a value as they ought on this benefit, and imagine it to be something of an ordinary kind, which naturally belongs to all men. But he shews that this grace is supernatural, and therefore it ought to be distinguished from nature; which is clearly shewn by the repetition of the words *upon thee,* in the preceding verse.

First, then, we ought to believe that this benefit comes from God alone; and secondly, that all are not indiscriminately partakers of it, but only the elect, on whom the Lord shines by undeserved favour, so as to take them out of the ordinary rank of men. This is done by Christ, who is called "the Sun of Righteousness," because we are enlightened as if by his rays. (Mal. iv. 2.) Besides, the Prophet declares that this favour shall be spread far and wide by the Jews; which is also intimated by the words of the covenant, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." (Gen. xxii. 18.)

To thy brightness. If one nation only had enjoyed the light, it would have been of no advantage to the rest; but, so far as the doctrine of the Gospel has been spread throughout the whole world, Judea has held out the light to the Gentiles formerly blinded, in order to point out the way. By making the brightness peculiar to a single nation, he shews that in no other way could the world be enlightened, or come to share in this benefit, than by seeking light from that word which proceeded from the Jews, and was heard at Jerusalem, where the lamp of the Lord was kindled, and where the Sun of Righteousness arose, that from it he might diffuse his light to all the ends of the earth, as we have formerly seen, "Out of Zion shall go forth the Law." (Isa. ii. 3.) There is, therefore, no light but from the doctrine of the

prophets; so that they who withdraw from it falsely boast of walking in the light.

And kings to the brightness of thy rising. He alludes to the dawn; for, as the morning-star begins the day in one quarter only of heaven, and immediately the sun enlightens the whole world, so the daybreak was first in Judea, from which the light arose and was afterwards diffused throughout the whole world; for there is no corner of the earth which the Lord has not enlightened by this light. He mentions "kings," that they might not imagine that none but the common people would come to this light, but princes and nobles, who in other respects are greatly delighted with their high rank. But now he confers on the Church the very highest honour, that she shines with such brightness as to attract to herself nations and princes. He calls it "the light" of the Church; not that she has any light from herself, but borrows it from Christ, as the moon borrows from the sun.

4. *Lift up thine eyes round about.* By a variety of expressions he confirms that promise of the restoration of the Church which appeared to be altogether incredible. Nor was it easy to convince the Jews of this, while the state of their affairs was so wretched and confused. At that time the kingdom of Judah alone remained, and grew less every day, till it was utterly ruined; but when the people were led into captivity amidst that frightful dispersion and melancholy ruin, everything was so desperate that it appeared as if the Church were entirely ruined. It was therefore proper to confirm this doctrine by a variety of expressions, that hearts naturally prone to distrust might no longer doubt. For this reason he leads the Jews to look at the event as actually at hand, though it was at a great distance; that they might not hesitate any more than if it were already placed before their eyes.

He bids believers lift up their eyes on high, that is, above human thought; for, so long as we fix them on the outward condition, we cannot obtain the fruit of these promises. He adds, "round about," that they may fully believe that the nations will come, not from one quarter only, but from every

direction, that they may be united in one body. And not only does he promise a remedy and an end of the dispersion which was yet to take place, as it is said elsewhere, "He will gather the dispersed of Israel," (Ps. cxlvii. 2; Isa. lvi. 8,) but this gathering is more extensive; for it means that there will be a wonderful revolution in the world, so that they who formerly were strangers and dispersed shall be united in one body. Finally, it denotes the extension of the Church to the farthest boundaries of the earth. There is also an implied contrast, by which he points out the wretched and afflicted condition in which the world was, before it was gathered together under the direction of Christ.

Thy sons shall come from far. Some think that by "sons" are meant those who are stronger and more steadfast in faith, and by *daughters* those who are weaker. But I do not think that the Prophet intended to convey such ingenious distinctions;[1] and therefore I consider the plain meaning to be, that both sons and daughters shall run together to the Church; that is, that the Church shall have sons and daughters, not only at home but abroad, and in the most distant parts of the world; that the womb of the Church shall not be limited to any corner of the world, but shall be extended as far and wide as there shall be space throughout the whole world.

5. *Then shalt thou see.* These things appear, at first sight, to be somewhat inconsistent with each other, that formerly he spoke of the fact as present, and now foretells it as future. But formerly he spoke of the eyes of faith, which beholds those things which do not fall under the senses of men, and now he speaks of the actual event; or, at least, he intended by the present tense to point out the certainty; but now, in order that believers may continue to exercise patience, he limits the same statement. Besides, although those things which the Lord promises are concealed, for a time, from the eyes of men, yet believers perceive them by faith; so that they have a firm belief and expectation of the accomplish-

[1] "There is more probability in Knobel's suggestion, that the Prophet made his picture true to nature by describing the sons as walking, and the daughters as being carried."—*Alexander.*

ment of them, however incredible they may appear to others.

Thou shalt shine, or, *thou shalt overflow.* As the verb נהר (*nāhăr*) signifies both "to shine" and "to overflow," so it may be rendered either way.[1] We may refer it to that joy with which the Church is filled and overflows, when it is enlarged in this manner, or to the ornament with which it shines and dazzles.[2]

Thou shalt tremble. He now mentions "trembling," and connects it with splendour or joy; and this may appear to be inconsistent with the meaning assigned to the former clause. But I have no doubt that he intended, by this word, to express the astonishment and even amazement with which the Church shall be seized, when she shall perceive that this strange and unexpected honour has been obtained by her, and that she has been elevated to so high a rank of honour. As if he had said, "The extent of the work will be so great as to exceed thy expectation." It is not, therefore, the "trembling" which is produced by some danger or some melancholy event, but such as commonly arises in matters of great importance, which exceed the capacity of our understanding, when we are struck with amazement, and almost think that we dream; and this "trembling" agrees very well with joy.

6. *A multitude of camels shall cover thee.* The Prophet describes figuratively the glory of the Church, and accommodates his discourse to the time, and to the persons with whom he had to do. We must keep in remembrance what we have often said, that the prophets took into account the people whom they taught, and therefore mentioned custom-

[1] "As to נהר, (*nāhăr,*) the difficulty is in choosing between its two admitted senses of 'flowing,' (Isa. ii. 2,) and of 'shining,' (Ps. xxxiv. 5.) The former is preferred by Jerome, who translates it *afflues;* by Junius and Tremellius, who have *conflues;* and by the English and Dutch versions, the latter of which refers it to the confluence of crowds produced by any strange occurrence. Vitringa makes it mean to *flow out*, and Lowth to *overflow* with joy. But all the latest writers of authority give the word the same sense as in Ps. xxxiv. 5, which is well expressed by Henderson in strong though homely English, *thou shalt look and brighten up.*" —*Alexander.*

[2] "Qui la fait reluire." "Which causes it to shine."

ary transactions and well-known ceremonies, that, under the figures of them, they might describe the spiritual worship of God. The Jews must be first instructed, and afterwards the Gentiles, to whom the truth of those things has come; as if he had said, that nations far distant shall come, with their wealth, into the power of God; for, when he foretells that the Church shall be enriched, this must not be understood as referring to the persons of men; but, on account of the unity of the Head and the members, what belongs to God and to Christ is transferred to the Church. Foolishly, therefore, do the Jews, under the pretence of this prophecy, devour with their insatiable avarice all the riches of the earth; and not less absurdly do the Papists torture these words to support their luxuries, wealth, and magnificence.

He mentions "camels, frankincense, gold, and sheep," because he has in his eye what each country produces, in order to shew that all will consecrate to God whatever they shall have in their power, and will offer themselves and all that they have as a sacrifice. Hence it ought to be inferred, that we cannot be truly converted to the Lord, without offering to him all our faculties; for these are "spiritual sacrifices," (1 Pet. ii. 5,) which he demands, and which cannot be refused to him, if our hearts be dedicated and consecrated to him in sincerity. (Rom. xii. 1.) Wicked men abuse the gifts of God for luxury and intemperance, and corrupt them, as far as lies in their power, by unworthy profanation; but good men, by using them with a pure conscience, dedicate them to the Lord. No one, therefore, can belong to God without dedicating and devoting to him all that he has.

7. *Kedar, Nebaioth.* So far as relates to the countries which the Prophet here enumerates, it is unnecessary to explain in what place each of them is situated; but it ought to be observed, in passing, that he mentions here those countries which lay toward the East, and chiefly Arabia and neighbouring places, which he describes under the names of "Kedar" and "Nebaioth." The Papists have also abused this passage, in order to prove that kings came from the East to offer gifts to Christ; and, in so doing, they make themselves exceedingly ridiculous, seeing that the Prophet

speaks of all ranks of men. But they heap up, without judgment, all passages of this kind, in which mention is made of "gold" or "frankincense," as if the prophets meant those gifts which the magi offered. (Matt. ii. 11.) But in this passage there is no obscurity; for it means that everywhere men shall call upon God, and all foreigners shall assemble to worship him.

They shall ascend to the good pleasure of my altar. Others render the words, "They shall ascend with good pleasure on my altar," and think (not altogether without reason, in my opinion) that it is a figure of speech by which words interchange their cases with each other, and that the Prophet means that those sacrifices which shall be offered by the Gentiles will be acceptable to God. Others interpret רצון (*rātzōn*) as if it were an adjective, which does not agree with the correct use of the language; for רצון (*rātzōn*) signifies benevolence or favour. For this reason I consider the rendering which I have given to be preferable; namely, that "sacrifices shall ascend to the good pleasure of the altar;" and the meaning may be brought out in this manner, "They shall ascend to appease God; as it is for this purpose that an altar has been appointed, and sacrifices are offered, that God may be reconciled and favourable to men; and God also, according to his promise, accepts the sacrifices that have been offered on his altar;" for at that time the "altar" was the approach to obtain God's favour.

Here the Prophet plainly expresses three things. First, when he says that "the sacrifices ascend," he alludes to the ancient ceremony, which was formerly observed by them in sacrifices; for they lifted up the slain beasts; by which they meant that all men ought to raise their hearts on high, that they might not keep their eyes fixed on the earth or look only at the sacrifice which was offered. Secondly, the Prophet says that those sacrifices are acceptable to God, that they may be distinguished from the profane offerings of the Gentiles, which were unaccompanied by faith. Thirdly, he says, "On the altar," which alone can "sanctify the offerings," (Matt. xxiii. 19;) for all that was offered anywhere else was unholy and detestable. Besides, this figure ought to

lead us to the truth; for Christ is the altar of God, and on him we must offer, if we wish that God should accept our sacrifices.

And I will glorify the house of my glory. Under the glorification of the temple he declares the true restoration of the people; for the chief part of their happiness was, that the temple should stand, in which men called on God in a right manner; and we must begin with this, that God reigns amongst us, by which we are made truly happy. For this reason, when the Lord declares that the Church shall be restored, he mentions the temple, the glory of which he will restore; as if he had said, "My house is now exposed to the mockery of the Gentiles, but I will at length restore to it that glory of which it has now been deprived." It is evident from Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi, that this was not completed immediately after the return of the people. We must not imagine that its true dignity consisted in that splendid building by which Herod cunningly endeavoured to gain favour; and therefore the dignity or honour, which is here mentioned, was not manifested till God opened the gate of heaven to Jerusalem, and then openly called all the Gentiles to the hope of eternal salvation.

8. *Who are those?* As the Prophet cannot satisfy himself in describing this gift of God, he breaks out into admiration, and exclaims, "Who are those?" This is far more forcible than if he had simply said that an inconceivable multitude was flying, and had even made use of the same metaphors. He intended, therefore, to describe how splendid this multiplication would be, when he could not find words sufficient to express it.

That fly as a cloud.[1] It is generally thought that this denotes the Apostles, who, with incredible swiftness, made their way to the farthest boundaries of the world; and there is some plausibility in that interpretation. (Mark xvi. 15.) But the Prophet speaks of a universal assemblage of the

[1] "It is a fine conception of Vitringa, that the ships expressly mentioned in the next verse are here described, on their first appearance at a distance, resembling with their outspread sails and rapid course a fleecy cloud driven by the wind, and a flight of doves returning to their young."—*Alexander.*

Church ; for from every quarter men shall run to it readily and cheerfully.

And as doves to their windows.[1] The metaphor of "doves," which he employs, is highly appropriate to this subject ; for, when they are dispersed through the fields, they appear not to differ at all from untamed birds ; and yet they are domesticated, and have their pigeon-house, to which they betake themselves, and in which they build their nests. Thus believers, enlightened by faith, begin to perceive their assembly, to which they fly from frightful dispersion. How necessary this warning was, will be readily perceived by all who shall take into account their wretched and alarming condition at that time ; for, if the prophets, after having carefully instructed the Jews for many years, could gain very little or hardly any success, what was to be expected from the Gentiles, who were altogether alienated from God ? Was it not (*παράδοξον*) beyond all reasonable expectation, that the Gentiles would one day come into the Church ? Yet the Prophet does not speak extravagantly, but is filled with such amazement that he leads us to admire it in the same manner.

9. *Surely the islands shall wait for me.* After having employed every eulogium that he could find for extolling that wonderful benefit of restoration, Isaiah introduces God himself as speaking, that the discourse may carry greater weight. This "waiting" is supposed by some to denote desire ; as if he had said that this is done, because nations beyond the seas shall, as it were, hunger after him ; because

[1] "The ideas conveyed by the images here employed are those of number and velocity. The reference to the doves is beautifully illustrated by a passage in Morier's Second Journey in Persia. Speaking of the pigeon-houses near Ispahan, he says : 'They are large round towers, rather broader at the bottom than the top, crowned by conical spiracles, through which the pigeons descend. Their interior resembles a honey-comb, pierced with a thousand holes, each of which forms a snug retreat for a nest. The extraordinary flights of pigeons which I have seen upon one of these buildings, afford perhaps a good illustration of Isaiah lx. 8. Their great numbers, and the compactness of their mass, literally looked like a cloud at a distance, and obscured the sun in their passage.' The persons referred to are the Jews, who now flock in immense numbers from all quarters to the land of their fathers, Jerusalem, the summit of their earthly joy."—*Henderson.*

they shall feel that they are destitute of life and salvation. Others view it as simply denoting hope. But sometimes it likewise means "to observe," in which sense David employs it. "Wicked men wait for my soul;" that is, "they lay snares for my life." (Ps. lvi. 6.) In that sense it may be understood in this passage. "They shall wait for," that is, they shall observe my will; as servants are wont to comply with the will of their masters. Do not wonder, therefore, that so many shall flow into the Church; for "the islands," which at present sometimes despise and sometimes fight against me, shall be so attentive to me as to execute whatever I shall command. And indeed from the remainder of the verse it is manifest that he now speaks of that kind of obedience.

And the ships of Tarshish. If it be thought preferable, the particle כ, (*caph,*) *as,* may be here supplied in this manner: "*As* the ships of Tarshish formerly traded with Judea, and brought what was necessary for building the temple and for the use of men, so they shall again renew their traffic, and that navigation which had been broken off shall bring them back to their former course. By "Tarshish," that is, Cilicia, he means, (συνεκδοχικῶς) by a figure of speech in which a part is taken for the whole, all the naval intercourse and all the traffic which they carried on with foreign nations. It may also be supposed simply to mean, "The ships of Tarshish, which now proudly despise my Church, shall be subjected to my authority, and shall bring sons to her from distant countries."

Their silver and gold with them. He again repeats what he had formerly said, that the Gentiles shall yield obedience to God in such a manner as to offer themselves and all that they have. The Popish doctors, as I remarked a little before, display consummate impudence in abusing these proofs for defending that tyrannical and theatrical[1] display by which Roman antichrist, and his attendants, wish to attain fame and distinction. Abounding in luxury, adorning themselves with gold and jewels, and indeed with the attire

[1] "Et Persiques." "And Persian." The reference is to that love of display which has always prevailed in Asiatic countries.—*Ed.*

of a harlot, they are not ashamed of representing the Holy Spirit as the author of this wickedness; so that, whenever gold and silver are mentioned in Scripture, they apply it to their luxury. In this respect they certainly are very like the Jews, who rise to ecstatic delight at the mention of gold and silver, and hope to wallow in them, when Messiah comes. Thus the Papists think of nothing else than gold and silver, and their understandings are so much dazzled by that empty display that they cannot raise them to heaven. But such stupidity does not need a lengthened refutation.

To the name of Jehovah thy God. The general meaning is, that God intends to elevate his Church to the highest honour, and to adorn her with necessary ornaments. And that believers may not have their minds disturbed by any doubt of so illustrious a promise, or ascribe anything to their own merits, God himself promises that he will be the author of this event, *for he will glorify thee.* Besides, the Prophet declares that the riches of the Gentiles, which he appeared to represent, a little before, as the prey of the Church or the prize of victory, shall be a sacred offering to God; and thus he states more clearly what I have said, that there is nothing which we ought to desire more earnestly than that the whole world should bow to the authority of God.

10. *And the sons of the stranger shall build thy walls.* He continues the same subject. As he formerly said that foreigners shall submit to his authority, in order to build the temple; so he now says that "the sons of the stranger" shall bestow their labour in building the walls. Various are the comparisons by which he promises the restoration of the Church. It is customary in Scripture, when the Church is spoken of, to exhibit sometimes the temple, and sometimes Jerusalem. He promises that foreigners and strangers shall assist in rearing this building, that the Jews may not be terrified by their poverty or their small number, and consequently lose heart; for they might be tempted to distrust during the captivity, so that, though they hoped to return to their native country, still they might think that this could could not be accomplished by them.

Now, Cyrus accomplished it, when he supplied them with

a large amount of gold and silver. But in him these things were merely shadowed out. They were actually fulfilled in Christ, to whose reign they must entirely relate; for, first, Christ employed a few apostles, (Matt. x. 1,) who could not be sufficient for so great a work; but afterwards he raised up strangers, from among whom he chose pastors, and wished that their foreign princes should be nursing-fathers of the Church.

With aggravated wickedness do the Papists pervert and corrupt this passage, by torturing it to uphold the tyranny of the Pope, whom they wish to possess supreme power over kings and princes. They speak impudent falsehood when they say that he is Christ's deputy; for Christ's "kingdom" is not of this world. (John xviii. 36.) The Pope rules barbarously and tyrannically, and claims the power of changing and disposing of kingdoms. But kings submit to Christ in such a manner that they do not cease to be kings, but exercise all their power for preserving the worship of God and administering righteous government.

Hence we see how much those persons are opposed to the kingdom of Christ who wish to snatch authority and power from kings, that they themselves may possess it. Hence also the Anabaptists may be refuted, who overturn political order so far as to imagine that kings cannot be Christians in any other way than by renouncing their own authority, since even in the royal rank God shews that he wishes to hold the highest place.

For in my wrath I smote thee. Lest any one should object that it would have been easier to preserve the Church uninjured than to raise her from hell, God anticipates the objection, and shews that the Jews were justly afflicted in this manner, because he had been exceedingly provoked by their offences; but he gives them good ground of hope, because he does not choose to demand the punishment which they had deserved, but will be satisfied, provided that a temporary chastisement shall humble them.

In my kindness have I had compassion on thee. He reminds the Jews what is the cause of this change, that they may not judge of it according to their own apprehension.

When kingdoms are changed, and frequently rise and fall, men think that these events happen by chance, and that it is the common lot of the world. The Jews might think the same thing, when, in consequence of the kingdom of the Babylonians having been overturned, they were restored to liberty. For this reason the Lord testifies that all these things are governed by his providence; that is, that they may not shut their eyes after the manner of heathens. It is as if he had said, "If thou inquire why thou hast endured so many afflictions, the reason is this, that I was angry with thee and punished thy transgressions. But if thou ask the cause of thy deliverance, my undeserved kindness, and not thy worthiness, or an accidental occurrence, was the cause." Accordingly, calamities do not happen by chance, nor is God angry without cause; and he is not angry to such a degree as not to leave room for his compassion. (Hab. iii. 2.)

11. *And thy gates shall be open continually.* The ordinary exposition of this verse is incorrect. The Prophet is generally supposed to mean that the Church will be perfectly safe under the Lord's protection and guardianship; for "open gates" indicate that danger is far off. But I think that the Prophet himself explains it; namely, that the gates shall be open, that riches may be brought into the city from every quarter. And as burdens are usually carried in the daytime, "The day," he says, "will not be enough, so vast shall be the crowd of those who bring into it precious treasures, and therefore the carrying will be so constant that it will be necessary to keep the gates open night and day."[1]

When he says that *the riches of the Gentiles* shall belong to the Church, let us not view this as referring to carnal luxury, but to obedience, which the whole world shall render to God in the Church; for he says that what is offered to God belongs to the Church, because here God has nothing separate from it.

[1] "The idea conveyed by the gates never being shut is that of the continual arrival of the multitudes referred to. Modern travellers greatly complain of the inconvenience to which they are put, when they do not reach Jerusalem before the gates are closed. The Apostle John borrows the language in his description of the New Jerusalem. (Rev. xxi. 25.) The ideas of security and peace are implied."—*Henderson.*

That their kings may be led. I prefer retaining the participial form which the Prophet employs, instead of following those who change it into a verb. Such commentators corrupt the Prophet's meaning, who expressly added this, because so great is the haughtiness of kings that they can scarcely endure to be led, but rather, relying on their power, give free scope to their inclinations, and not only are driven along so as to be the sport of their passions, but, like violent torrents, drag others along with them. He shews, therefore, that these kings, though naturally haughty and ungovernable, shall submit to the authority of God and of the Church.

12. *For the nation and kingdom.* The Prophet dwells largely on confirming the hearts of believers, that they may not doubt that the restoration shall be such as he has described. Those events were altogether incredible; and we ourselves, though we have obtained abundant confirmation of them from the actual event, (for they have been made manifest to the eyes of all,) yet, unless we are guided by the Spirit of the Lord, could hardly conceive of them in our mind. He shews, therefore, that there is no reason why the Jews should doubt as to the restoration of the temple, because the Gentiles will aid them to the utmost of their power. But here Isaiah looks at something higher than the building of the visible temple; for he intends to speak of that obedience which kings and nobles and the common people render to the Church when they promote, as far as they are able, pure doctrine.

Shall perish. He goes still farther, and confirms his statement the more by declaring that "the kingdoms and nations which will not serve the Church shall be destroyed." And if so dreadful a punishment was pronounced against those who did not aid the Church, what shall we say of the tyrants who rush upon her with furious attack, and labour with all their might to destroy her? If careless and slothful men do not pass unpunished, does not a fearful vengeance await the ungodly, who disturb and overturn the work of the Lord?

The nations, I say, shall be utterly destroyed. What he had said in the singular number he immediately repeats in

the plural, in order to shew that even the whole world, if it be involved in the same guilt, shall likewise perish; for their multitude will not be able to prevent all who are estranged from God from perishing, and ungodly men will have no excuse for throwing obstacles in each other's way, or for encouraging each other to impiety and wickedness. Kings and nations are said, as we have already seen, to "serve the Church;" not that she exercises any dominion over them, but because God has committed to her the sceptre of his word by which he rules.

13. *The glory of Lebanon.* Isaiah again employs the metaphor which he formerly used, when he compared the Church of God to a building or a city. He enumerates those things which were necessary for building, such as "the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree," which grew in Lebanon, a forest abounding, as we know, in excellent trees.

For the beauty of the place of my holiness. He means that all that is excellent and beautiful in Lebanon shall be carried into the Church. But it must be believed that these figures contain an emblematical reference to the spiritual worship of God; for the Lord adorns his Church with the title of a sanctuary, because he dwells in the midst of it. Yet he always alludes to the temple, so as to accommodate himself to the time and to ordinary custom. Thus he holds out to us the pattern of the temple which stood at Jerusalem, that under the image of it we may contemplate the "spiritual temple," (Eph. ii. 21,) of which we are the "living stones" and the living substance. (1 Pet. ii. 5.)

For I will glorify the place of my feet. By "the place of his feet," he means that he dwells in the temple in such a manner that his majesty is not confined within it, (for he is not limited to so narrow a place;) and therefore his feet only, what may be called the smallest part, is there, that we may ascend to heaven, and not fix our whole attention on those outward signs by which we are instructed according to our capacity. Thus also in the Psalm, "Worship the footstool of his feet, for it is holy." (Ps. xcix. 5.) And again, "We will worship in the place where his feet stood." (Ps. cxxxii. 7.) Not that God's essence is divided into parts above and

below,[1] but because by such means he lifts up his servants, as it were, from the feet to the head.

14. *And the sons of them that afflict thee shall come.* He continues the same subject, for he shews how splendid will be this work of redemption; that is, that they who persecuted or despised the Church "shall come," so as to bow down humbly before her, and submit to her with their whole heart. By "the sons of them that afflict her," he means the persecutors and enemies who oppressed her. This was indeed partly fulfilled, when the Jews returned to their native country; but that return was nothing more than a dark shadow of the deliverance which we have obtained through Christ. These things were actually accomplished under the reign of Christ, yet so that the full accomplishment of them may be expected at his second coming, as we have already said under a different passage.

Some one will ask, "Is not this honour, of which the Prophet speaks, excessive and greater than ought to be given to the Church? for to bow down and prostrate ourselves are tokens of honour which no human being ought to receive." I reply, this honour is rendered, not to the members, but to the Head; that is, to Christ, who is worshipped in the Church; and this worship is rendered by those who formerly hated and persecuted him. Now we say that Christ is worshipped in the Church, not as the Papists do, who think that the honour which they bestow on that Roman idol is rendered to Christ.[2] They for whose sake these things are said reject and despise doctrine; for Christ is honoured by those who obey his doctrine. And this is what the Prophet means, that they who were formerly alienated from it shall heartily submit, so as to obey Christ; for if Christ has any majesty, it shines forth in the doctrine which he administers by the agency of men.

They shall call thee the city of Jehovah. The Church had formerly been adorned with that title; but it was nearly obliterated when the city was destroyed, the temple thrown

[1] "L'une au ciel, l'autre en terre." "One in heaven, another on earth."

[2] "Qui pensent bien honnorer Christ en s'agenouillant devant cette idole de Rome pour baiser sa pantoufle." "Who think that they greatly honour Christ by kneeling before that idol of Rome to kiss his slipper."

down, and the people carried into captivity. Jerusalem was no more, and nothing was to be seen in it but frightful desolation; and therefore he means that it shall be restored in such a manner that all shall acknowledge it to be the city of God.

The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. He next speaks of the temple, that all may know that this high rank is ascribed to Jerusalem on account of the temple; that is, on account of the worship of God which the Lord established there.

15. *Instead of*[1] *thy having been forsaken and hated.* The Prophet has in his eye that intermediate period which was already at hand; for, soon after his death, the people were deprived of their heritage and led into captivity, so that all thought that there was no remaining hope of their safety. Lest this thought should come into the minds of believers, by which they might be reduced to despair, "We are undone, there can be no remedy for affairs so desperate, and we ought not to hope for a better condition," he shews that those grievous calamities cannot prevent God from restoring them; for, although for a time, when the Lord chastised them, they appeared to be forsaken, yet it was easy for him to raise them again to prosperity and to a better condition than before.

If any one object that this splendour of the Church was not of long duration, the reply is short. Although the people were afflicted in various ways after their return, and although even the Christian Church did not long retain its glory, yet those things which the Prophet foretold were fulfilled; for under the cross the glory of Christ shines forth, so that the name of God remains, and there is a people that calls upon him by faith. It ought also to be observed, that in consequence of our ingratitude, we do not obtain the fruit of those promises; for we interrupt the course of God's works, and deprive ourselves of the fruit of them by our malice. Besides, we ought always to keep in remembrance what I have so often said, that the Prophet does not speak of a few years

[1] "תחת (*tăchăth*) merely expresses 'in exchange for:' though, from the circumstances of the case, the idea of compensation is necessarily implied."—*Henderson.* "The תחת (*tăchăth*) may express either simply a change of condition, (whereas,) or the reason of the change, (because,) or the further idea of equitable ion."—*Alexander.*

or a short period, but embraces the whole course of redemption, from the end of the captivity to the preaching of the Gospel, and, finally, down to the end of the reign of Christ.

16. *And thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles.* He speaks of the extension of the Church which he had formerly mentioned; but it was of great importance that the same things should be frequently repeated, because it appeared to be incredible that the Church, which had been reduced to calamities so great and so numerous, would be restored and spread throughout the whole world. Her condition was desperate; but at length, out of that slender remnant which had been, as it were, snatched from the burning, to the great astonishment of all she was restored, and her seed was spread far and wide through every part of the world. And therefore it is as if he had said, "Although thou art confined within narrow limits, and thou hast had no intercourse with the Gentiles, yet thou wilt obtain very abundant fruit from them."

Thou shalt suck the breast of kings.[1] By "milk" and "breasts" he means nothing else than service and obedience, which the Gentiles shall render to the Church for supporting her offspring; for, having formerly said that at one birth she would bring forth innumerable children, he now gives them milk for nourishment till they grow up. And he speaks expressly of "kings," because it was more difficult to be believed. Here, too, in passing, "kings" are reminded of their duty; and if they wish to discharge it in a proper manner, they must be the servants of the Church; otherwise the Lord will call them to account. We see also what David says of them, "And now, O ye kings, be wise; and ye judges of the earth, be instructed. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling." (Ps. ii. 10, 11.)

But we ought carefully to observe in what manner the Church sucks "the milk" and "the breasts" of the Gentiles; for she is not at liberty to exhaust the wealth of the whole world, but to preserve her own condition safe and sound.

[1] "Sucking the breast of *kings* is unusual, and by fastidious critics may be deemed unnatural: but the phrase is merely employed for the purpose of carrying out more efficiently the idea taught in the preceding clause; namely, that abundant contributions would be made by the inhabitants of the different nations to the sustenance of Zion."—*Henderson.*

What is more inconsistent with the nature of a Church than to be an insatiable gulf, and to draw the wealth of all to herself? Those things, therefore, must relate to her spiritual condition, that God may be purely worshipped in her, that the ministry of the word may prosper and flourish, and that some discipline may be maintained, which shall serve as a bridle to restrain all. Yet let believers remember that (Acts xx. 35) "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and that they ought to bear poverty so patiently as to enrich others abundantly with spiritual benefits.

And thou shalt know that I Jehovah am thy Redeemer. At length he adds that what had been concealed for a time shall be made manifest, that the Jews were not elected in vain, because they shall know by undoubted experience that God takes care of their salvation. It may be asked, Did they not know this even before they were led into captivity? I answer, that captivity was like the thick darkness to which also the Prophet compared it in the beginning of this chapter. Since, therefore, during that harsh tyranny, they could not behold God's majesty and power, the Lord led them out into open day, not that faith gives way amidst afflictions, but that the feeling of faith is different from that of experience. When we appear to be ruined, faith raises itself above the present condition and the thick darkness in which we are involved; and if God restore us perfectly, then we see it, not by the eyes of faith, but by actual experience. And this is the clear knowledge of which he speaks; as if he had said, "When I shall have acted so kindly towards you, then you shall actually know that I am your Redeemer."

The mighty one of Jacob. He expressly claims the title of "the mighty one of Jacob," because he had often shewn that he was so; and not only had Jacob experience in various ways of the power of God, but Jacob's posterity had also known that in the power of God there was abundant protection. He therefore calls himself the "mighty one," that they may know that God will henceforth be to them what he formerly was to their fathers.

17. *For brass I will bring gold.* He alludes to the building of the ancient temple, and compares it with the heavenly

and spiritual temple; as if he had said, "When you shall be led into captivity, you will deplore the ruin of the temple, but I will cause you to build one far more excellent." Thus, "for brass I will bring gold, for iron silver, for wood brass, for stones iron;" that is, everything shall be full of magnificence and splendour in that temple which shall come in place of the former.

We know that this prediction was never accomplished in that external restoration of the people, or during the commencement of it, and even that the temple which was afterwards erected was far inferior to the former. It follows, therefore, that the Prophet, to whom a full redemption was exhibited in spirit, not only relates what shall happen immediately after the return of the people, but discourses concerning the excellence of the spiritual temple; that is, of the Church of Christ. We must, therefore, come down in uninterrupted succession to Christ, if we wish to understand this prophecy.. In his reign these things were abundantly fulfilled, and the glory of the former temple was greatly surpassed; for the Lord poured out gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are more excellent than gold, silver, and jewels. We may therefore see the temple now built with precious stones, as was formerly said. (Is. liv. 11, 12.)

I will make thy magistracy peace.[1] Instead of "magistracy" some render the word "tribute." I have no doubt that the Prophet intended indirectly to compare the wretched bondage of the people under which they were to be kept, with that pre-eminently high rank which they afterwards obtained. With "peace" and "righteousness" he contrasts the "magistrates" who exercised unjust rule, while they were harassed by the avarice and cruelty of the Babylonians.

And thy exactors righteousness. He now shews that when their "exactors" shall have been exterminated, there will be

[1] "'And I will make thy magistracy peace;' that is, 'I will make thy rulers peaceful. פקדה, (*pĕkūdāh*,) which evidently corresponds to the Greek word ἐπισκοπὴ, is here used by metonymy for אנשי פקדה, (*ănshē pĕkūdāh*,) or בעלי פקדה, (*băgnălē pĕkūdāh*,) those who discharge the office of magistracy, as in 2 Kings xi. 18, Ezek. xliv. 11. The Septu[illegible]t renders it ἄρχοντάς σου, 'thy rulers,' and the Chaldee פרנסך, ([illegible]ou,) 'thy governors.'"—*Rosenmüller*.

no "magistracy" but that of "peace" and "righteousness." "They who shall have power over thee will observe righteousness and peace." This was more fully accomplished when, through Christ, we were delivered from the tyranny of the devil; for by the Gospel he set up a kingdom of righteousness which he has not yet completed; but we must look for his last coming so as to have our eyes eagerly fixed on it, and, in the meantime, must be satisfied with those first-fruits.

18. *Oppression shall no longer be heard in thy land.* Here he states more clearly what we have already said, namely, that, while the Prophet discourses concerning the prosperous condition of the Church, he indirectly contrasts the miseries and calamities by which they had been afflicted in various ways. He promises, therefore, that they shall never afterwards be subjected to such afflictions. Yet nevertheless various afflictions afterwards befell them. This is undoubtedly true; but the people were never scattered in such a manner as not to have some remaining form of the Church, and thus to enjoy peace, and to feel that they were protected and kept by the hand of God. These words did not contain a promise of exemption from every annoyance and distress; but by comparison they held out this solace for future evils, that God spares his Church, and consequently the Church shall be safe under his protection; and during the very course of the deliverance there was exhibited a striking proof of this peace, which the Prophet extols. Finally, we must always keep in remembrance what we have so often said, that it is only in part that all these things are experienced by us; for the kingdom of Christ has not yet been completed.

And thy gates Praise. He alludes, as we have often said already, to the building of the temple or the city, and shews that the Church shall be safe, not by means of walls, or towers, or any enclosures, but that, although there are no earthly defences, there shall be abundance of safety and peaceful joy in God alone. Now he connects the safety of the Church with "peace" or "joy;" because she rejoices at being safe and sound, whereas formerly she lay silently in affliction and despair.

19 and 20. *And thou shalt no longer have the sun for the light of days.* He teaches that the prosperity of the Church shall not be temporary, but permanent; for he distinguishes it from the ordinary condition of men, among whom there is nothing steadfast or permanent; because there is nothing under the sun, however well regulated, that is not subject to various changes. But we ought not to judge of the Church from the dangers of the present life; for she is preserved in the midst of the billows; as if he had said, "Do not judge of thy safety from the present appearance of things, but know that it is laid up in God. God will be thy sun, so that thou hast no need of borrowing light from the sun or the moon. Do not, therefore, dread any change or revolution of affairs; for thou shalt have a perpetual and unchangeable light."

By these words the Prophet does not mean that the children of God shall be deprived of the ordinary advantages of life; for, since the Lord bestows them indiscriminately on all men, he certainly has appointed them also for his children, for whose sake, indeed, God created all things, since he exercises a peculiar care over them. But the Prophet intended to express a still greater blessing, which the children of God alone enjoy, namely, the heavenly Light, which ungodly men hate, and therefore cannot receive; for, although they enjoy the sun and other blessings, yet their happiness cannot be firm and enduring; because, being void of taste, they do not relish that which was of the greatest importance, that they have God for their Father.

Thus he distinguishes the condition of the Church and of believers from the ordinary lot of men, that we may not judge of it from the revolution and change of events, and next that we may know that, amidst the thickest darkness, the fatherly kindness of God shines on believers, in order to cheer them. And, indeed, although all the elements either cease to discharge their duty, or threaten us with a melancholy aspect, yet it ought to be enough that God is reconciled to us. By a figure of speech, in which a part is taken for the whole, he includes, under the terms "Sun" and

"Moon," the whole condition of man, which is continually undergoing change.

21. *Thy people also are all righteous.* Here he shews what is the true establishment of the Church; namely, when she is purged of the ungodly, and none but righteous men have a place in her. Yet we know that, in the Church, hypocrites have always been mingled with the true children of God. We have said that this is a description of the whole reign of Christ, not such as it shall be at any one moment, but in its perfection. Christ began to do this at his coming, when he purged the Church. Hence also he calls the Church "a sieve," (Matt. iii. 12,) because by means of it the chaff is separated from the wheat; but he goes on from day to day in purifying it, and will go on till the day of harvest. Yet there must be much rubbish mixed with the wheat, which shall at length be removed on that day. Besides, there is an implied contrast between this people and that irreligious and unholy multitude which, by its defilement, had polluted the sanctuary of God. The use of the plural number appears to denote an assemblage of nations, when he says that all the peoples shall be righteous.

They shall inherit the land for ever. I have no doubt that, in these words, the Prophet had his eye on Judea, and indirectly contrasted the time of restoration with the time of the captivity which was immediately at hand; as if he had said, "Though I drive out my people from their inheritance, yet after seventy years I will restore them, that they may possess it for ever." Besides, it ought to be observed that, when he limits to the "righteous" that promise which related to the people of Zion, there is implied a sort of correction, in order to exclude hypocrites, who falsely and unwarrantably are wont to appropriate to themselves what is said about the true children of God.

This sentiment, therefore, agrees with these words, "How good is God to Israel, to those who are of an upright heart!" in which the Psalmist claims the name of "Israel," which all without exception had in their mouth, as belonging to none but God's sincere worshippers. (Ps. lxxiii. 1.) Such is the import, in this passage, of the phrase, "Thy people," that

is, the remaining portion which shall have been purged from its defilement. This was not, in every respect, fulfilled in the Jews; but a beginning was made with them, when they were restored to their native country, that, by their agency, the possession of the whole earth might afterwards be given to them, that is, to the children of God. For as he formerly spoke of the restoration of the temple, which was not complete at Jerusalem, but must be extended throughout the whole world, so the possession of this land must not be limited to Judea, since it is more extensive, and all men are called to it, that by faith they may be children of Abraham, and may thus become heirs of it. (Gal. iv. 28.)

We must therefore observe carefully those modes of expression which are customary among the prophets, that we may understand their meaning, and not break off sentences, or torture them to meanings different from what was intended. Exceedingly unnatural and inconsistent with the style of the prophets is the interpretation of those who explain "the land" to mean heaven and the blessed life; for the land of Canaan was given to the children of God with this intention, that, being separated from the whole world, and having become God's heritage, they might worship him there in a right manner; and consequently, to dwell in the land by right of inheritance means nothing else than to remain in the family of God.

The branch of his planting. When God declares that a new "branch," which shall come forth, shall be *the work of his hands,* this tends to confirm the hope;[1] for it was impossible, to human view, that the Church should spring up again, which all perceived to be dead, especially while the root was hidden. Thus, in order that it may spring up, he says that God will be like a husbandman, who plants anew that which had been torn up and was withered. In a word, he declares that it will be a wonderful work of God, and not of men, that the Church shall be rescued from a wretched and harsh captivity; for she shall be raised up as from the dead. And indeed all that relates to the heavenly life was

[1] "Pour confermer l'esperance des fideles." "To confirm the hope of believers."

neither produced in us by nature nor obtained by our own strength, but flows and proceeds from God alone. What is here said universally concerning the whole body every person ought to apply to himself in particular; for we are God's "planting" before the world was made, (Eph. i. 4,) and were afterwards ingrafted into Christ, and called, that we might have the testimony of our election and planting. Wicked men are not God's planting; and therefore Christ declares that "they whom his heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." (Matt. xv. 13.)

That I may be glorified. At length he adds the end of the "planting," that we may celebrate the perfections of God, (1 Pet. ii. 9,) and may shew forth his glory, as Paul beautifully explains. (Eph. i. 12.)

22. *A little one shall become a thousand.* He again confirms what he formerly said, that, although they were few in number, yet the Church of God would be populous. When the Prophet foretold these things, there was still a vast multitude of people; but afterwards it was so greatly diminished that not more than a feeble remnant was left, as we have formerly seen. (Isa. i. 9; x. 22.) He declares that the small number shall be so much enlarged, that it shall afterwards be a vast body of people, and shall possess great strength. Let us consider that what was said to the Jews is now said also to us; that is, though we are few in number and inconsiderable, and appear to be very near destruction, still the Church cannot perish, but will be enlarged and multiplied till it become very numerous; for it is God's planting, and therefore we must not judge of it from the multitude or strength of men.

I Jehovah. He now shews the reason why he said all those things which we have formerly seen; namely, that we may not suppose him to be like men, whose labours and efforts quickly pass away. Although they wish to change the condition of any kingdom or of the world, they will accomplish nothing; but the Lord changes everything in an instant. He does not speak, therefore, of an ordinary government, but of a wonderful work by which the Lord delivers and multiplies his Church.

Will hasten it in her time. He says that "he will hasten this," so as to complete it. But he employs a little word which deserves notice as to the time of the Church; for the relative is in the feminine gender, and is improperly interpreted by some as relating to God.[1] The Prophet means that there is a fixed time when the Church shall be delivered; and in this way he exhorts believers to patience, that they may not plunge headlong, but depend on God's eternal purpose, who knows how to arrange every moment in an appropriate manner.

First, then, he describes the seasonableness and the time when it is advantageous that the Church shall be delivered. We do not indeed perceive this, for we would wish to obtain instantly God's promises, and are impatient of delay; but the Lord delays for our benefit, and because the time is not yet come. Next, he speaks of haste; for the Lord appears to us to be idle and inactive, when he prolongs the time; although he hastens to accomplish everything at the proper season, which he knows.

CHAPTER LXI.

1. The Spirit of the Lord God *is* upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound;

1. Spiritus Domini Iehovæ super me; ob id unxit me Iehova; ad prædicandum afflictis misit me; ad obligandum contritos corde, ad publicandam captivis libertatem, vinctis apertionem carceris.

2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

2. Ad publicandum annum beneplaciti Iehovæ, et diem ultionis Deo nostro, ad consolandum omnes lugentes.

3. To appoint unto them that

3. Ad constituendum lugentibus

[1] Our author adds that he prefers "ejus tempore" to "suo tempore," for the sake of avoiding ambiguity; but unfortunately neither the Latin language nor his own vernacular could distinguish between the English pronouns *his, her,* and *its.*—*Ed.* "The pronouns in the last clause are correctly explained by Knobel as neuters, referring to the whole preceding series of prophecies. (Compare Isa. xliii. 13; xlvi. 11.) The *his* in the common version is equivalent to *its* in modern English, a possessive form apparently unknown to the translators of the Bible."—*Alexander.*

mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

4. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

5. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien *shall be* your ploughmen, and your vine-dressers.

6. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7. For your shame *ye shall have* double, and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double; everlasting joy shall be unto them.

8. For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they *are* the seed *which* the Lord hath blessed.

10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

11. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

in Sion, ut dem illis decorem pro cinere, oleum gaudii pro luctu, pallium lætitiæ pro spiritu angusto, ad vocandum eos arbores justitiæ, plantationem Iehovæ ad glorificandum.

4. Et ædificabunt deserta seculi, priscas solitudines erigent; et instaurabunt urbes vastitatis, solitudines multarum ætatum.

5. Et stabunt alieni, et pascent oves vestras; et filii alieni erunt agricolæ et vinitores vestri.

6. Vos autem sacerdotes Iehovæ vocabimini; ministri Dei nostri dicetur vobis; substantiam Gentium comedetis, et in gloria eorum vos elevabitis.

7. Pro pudore vestro erit duplex præmium, et pro ignominia exultabunt de portione eorum; quia in terra eorum duplicia possidebunt, et gaudium perpetuum illis erit.

8. Quia ego Iehova diligens judicium, odio habens rapinam in holocausto, et constituam opus eorum in veritate, et fœdus perpetuum feriam cum ipsis.

9. Et cognoscetur in Gentibus semen eorum, et germina eorum in medio populorum. Omnes qui viderint eos cognoscent eos quòd semen sint benedictum Iehovæ.

10. Gaudens gaudebo in Iehova; exultabit anima mea in Deo meo; quoniam induit me vestibus salutis, indumento justitiæ circumdedit me; quasi sponsum ornavit me, et quasi sponsam ornatam monilibus suis.

11. Quoniam sicut terra profert germen suum, et sicut hortus germinare facit semen suum; ita Dominus Iehova germinare faciet justitiam et laudem coram omnibus gentibus.

1. *The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah.* As Christ explains this passage with reference to himself, (Luke iv. 18,) so commentators limit it to him without hesitation, and lay down this principle, that Christ is introduced as speaking, as if the whole passage related to him alone. The Jews laugh at this, as an ill-advised application to Christ of that which is equally applicable to other prophets. My opinion is, that this chapter is added as a seal to the former, to confirm what had hitherto been said about restoring the Church of Christ; and that for this purpose Christ testifies that he has been anointed by God, in consequence of which he justly applies this prophecy to himself; for he has exhibited clearly and openly what others have laid down in an obscure manner.

But this is not inconsistent with the application of this statement to other prophets, whom the Lord has anointed; for they did not speak in their own name as individuals, or claim this authority for themselves, but were chiefly employed in pointing out the office of Christ, to whom belongs not only the publication of these things, but likewise the accomplishment of them. This chapter ought, therefore, to be understood in such a sense, that Christ, who is the Head of the prophets, holds the chief place, and alone makes all those revelations; but that Isaiah, and the other prophets, and the apostles, contribute their services to Christ, and each performs his part in making known Christ's benefits. And thus we see that those things which Isaiah said would be accomplished by Christ, have now been actually accomplished.

On that account Jehovah hath anointed me. This second clause is added in the room of exposition; for the first would have been somewhat obscure, if he had said nothing as to the purpose for which he was endued with the Spirit of God; but now it is made far more clear by pointing out the use, when he declares that he discharges a public office, that he may not be regarded as a private individual. Whenever Scripture mentions the Spirit, and says that he "dwelleth in us," (Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 16,) let us not look upon it as something empty or unmeaning, but let us contemplate his power and efficacy. Thus, after having spoken of the Spirit of God, the Prophet next mentions the "anointing," by

which he means the faculties which flow from him, as Paul teaches that the gifts are indeed various, but the Spirit is one. (1 Cor. xii. 4.)

This passage ought to be carefully observed, for no man can claim right or authority to teach unless he shew that he has been prompted to it by the Spirit of God, as Paul also affirms that "no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. xii. 3.) But, it will be said, we see that almost all men boast of having the Spirit of God; for the Pope, and the Anabaptists, and other heretics and fanatics, have his name continually in their mouth, as if they were governed by him. How, then, shall we judge that any man has been sent by God, and is guided by his Spirit? By "anointing;" that is, if he is endued with the gifts which are necessary for that office. If therefore, having been appointed by the Lord, he abound in the graces of the Spirit and the ability which the calling demands, he actually has the Spirit. And if he wish to make profession of enjoying that teacher, and if he have no doctrine,[1] let him be held as an impostor.

He hath sent me to preach. The Prophet does not claim for himself right and authority to teach, before he has shewn that the Lord "hath sent him" The authority is founded on his having been "anointed," that is, furnished by God with necessary gifts. We ought not to hear him, therefore, as a private individual, but as a public minister who has come from heaven.

To the afflicted. Some render it, "To the meek;" and both ideas are conveyed by the word עֲנָוִים, (*gnănāvim.*) But I preferred to adhere to the former signification, because the Prophet is speaking of captives and prisoners. Yet I think that he includes both; for he means those who, while they are altogether forsaken and abandoned, are also wretched in themselves. Christ is promised to none but those who have been humbled and overwhelmed by a conviction of their distresses, who have no lofty pretensions, but keep themselves in humility and modesty. And hence we infer that

[1] "S'il veut contrefaire le docteur, et n'a doctrine ni savoir." "If he wishes to counterfeit the teacher, and has not any doctrine or knowledge."

Isaiah speaks literally of the Gospel; for the Law was given for the purpose of abasing proud hearts which swelled with vain confidence, but the Gospel is intended for "the afflicted," that is, for those who know that they are destitute of everything good, that they may gather courage and support. For what purpose were prophets, and apostles, and other ministers, anointed and sent, but to cheer and comfort the afflicted by the doctrine of grace?

To bind up the broken in heart. Numerous are the metaphors which the Prophet employs for explaining more clearly the same thing. By "binding up," he means nothing else than "healing," but now he expresses something more than in the preceding clause; for he shews that the preaching of the word is not an empty sound, but a powerful medicine, the effect of which is felt, not by obdurate and hard-hearted men, but by wounded consciences.

To proclaim liberty to the captives. This also is the end of the Gospel, that they who are captives may be set at liberty. We are prisoners and captives, therefore, till we are set free (John viii. 36) through the grace of Christ; and when Christ wishes to break asunder our chains, let us not refuse the grace that is offered to us. It ought to be observed in general, that the blessings which are here enumerated are bestowed upon us by heavenly doctrine, and that none are fit for the enjoyment of them but those who, conscious of their poverty, eagerly desire the assistance of Christ, as he himself says, "Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will relieve you." (Matt. xi. 28.)

2. *To proclaim the year of the good-pleasure of Jehovah.* Here he expressly mentions the time of bestowing such distinguished grace, in order to remove the doubts which might arise. We know by daily experience how numerous and diversified are the anxious cares which distract the heart. He affirms that he is the herald of future grace, the time of which he fixes from the "good-pleasure" of God; for, as he was to be the Redeemer of the Church by free grace, so it was in his power, and justly, to select the time.

Perhaps he alludes to the Jubilee, (Lev. xxv. 10,) but undoubtedly he affirms that we must wait calmly and gently

till it please God to stretch out his hand. Paul calls this year "the time of fulness." (Gal. iv. 4.) We have likewise seen that the Prophet says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (Isa. xlix. 8.) Paul applies this to his own preaching; for, while the Lord addresses us by the Gospel, the door of heaven is thrown open to us, that we may now, as it were, enter into the possession of God's benefits. (2 Cor. vi. 2.) We must not delay, therefore, but must eagerly avail ourselves of the time and the occasion when such distinguished blessings are offered to us.

And the day of vengeance to our God. But those expressions appear to be inconsistent with each other, namely, "The day of good-pleasure," and "The day of vengeance." Why did Isaiah join together things so opposite? Because God cannot deliver his Church without shewing that he is a just judge, and without taking vengeance on the wicked. He therefore employs the term "good-pleasure," with reference to the elect, and the term "day of vengeance," with reference to the wicked, who cease not to persecute the Church, and consequently must be punished when the Church is delivered. In like manner Paul also says, that "It is righteous with God to grant relief to the afflicted, (2 Thess. i. 6,) and to reward the enemies of believers who unjustly afflict them;" and the Jews could not expect a termination of their distresses till their enemies had been destroyed.

Yet we ought to observe the cause of our deliverance; for to his mercy alone, and not to our merits, or excellence, or industry, must it be ascribed. He appears, indeed, as I briefly remarked a little before, to allude to the Jubilee; but above all things we should attend to this, that our salvation lies entirely in the gracious will of God.

To comfort all that mourn. We ought to keep in remembrance what we formerly remarked, that the end of the Gospel is, that we may be rescued from all evils, and that, having been restored to our former freedom, and all tears having been wiped from our eyes, we may partake of spiritual joy. And if we are not partakers of so great a benefit, it must be ascribed to our unbelief and ingratitude, by

which we refuse and drive away God, who freely offers himself to us.

3. *To appoint to the mourners in Zion.* He proceeds with the same subject; for he means that the punishment which was to be inflicted on the people shall be such as still to leave room for forgiveness. And, in order more fully to convince them of it, he says that the Lord has charged him with this office, that he may proclaim this deliverance; and not to himself only, but also to others, till the chief messenger arrive, namely, Christ, who actually bestows and exhibits what God at that time commanded to be made known for a future period. Yet he means that the "mourning" shall not hinder God from giving ground of joy, when he shall think proper; for "to appoint" has the same meaning as "to fix the time," that the tediousness of delay may not discourage them.

That I may give to them beauty for ashes. By the word *give* he speaks with commendation of the efficacy of the prediction, that they may be fully convinced of the event. The allusion is to the ancient customs of the Jews, who, when any calamity pressed hard upon them, sprinkled ashes on their heads, and wore sackcloth. (Esth. iv. 3.) By these he denotes the filth and mourning which necessarily attend the wretched condition of the people, and contrasts them with the joy and gladness which they shall have when they are restored to liberty. I think that we ought not to pass by the allusion contained in the words פְּאֵר (*pĕēr*) and אֵפֶר, (*ĕphĕr*;) for, by the mere transposition of letters, he intended to denote very different things, and, by an elegant inversion, a change of condition.

Trees of righteousness. By these words he points out the restoration of the people; as if he had said, "Whereas they had formerly been rooted out and resembled a dry stock, they shall be planted and settled." Thus he reminds them that they ought to contemplate the divine power, so that, though they are slain and dead, still they may confidently hope that they shall be restored so as to take root and to receive strength and increase. From this ought to be drawn a universal doctrine, namely, that there is no other way in which

we are restored to life than when we are planted by the Lord. We are indeed called his "planting," because he elected us from the beginning. (Eph. i. 4.) But there is also another kind of "planting" which follows the former, namely, the Calling, by which we are ingrafted through faith into Christ's body. The Lord does this by the agency and ministry of the Gospel; but it must be wholly ascribed to him, for "it is he alone that giveth the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 7.) We must always bear in mind the emblematical meaning of the first deliverance as illustrating the spiritual kingdom of Christ.

He gives the appellation of "trees of righteousness" to those in whom the justice of God or good order shines forth. Yet let us know that the Lord adopts us on this condition, that we shall become new creatures, and that true righteousness shall reign in us. And hence it follows that we are by nature depraved and corrupted, and cannot yield fruit in any other way than by being changed and planted by the Lord. This sets aside the vain and haughty opinion of the Papists, who, by contriving either preparations or the aids of free will, claim what belongs to God alone; for if we are planted by the Lord, it follows that we are by nature dry and unfruitful.

To glorify him. This is the design of our "planting;" but we have already spoken of these things in expounding the twenty-first verse of the preceding chapter.

4. *And they shall build the deserts of the age.* He goes on to describe more largely that restoration of the Church; and chiefly with this view, that the Jews may entertain confident hope of deliverance, because those promises appeared to be altogether incredible. And this is the reason why he adorns with extensive and magnificent terms that benefit of redemption. It is a mistake to suppose that these words, "the age" and "many ages," relate to a future period; as if he had said that the building of which he speaks shall be firm and permanent. The Prophet's meaning was widely different; for he shews (as I have explained at another passage) that the long-continued ruins of the city shall not prevent it from rising anew. When the inhabitants of any city, scat-

tered in all directions, have been absent for a very long time, there can be no hope of rebuilding it; just as no person in the present day takes any concern about rebuilding Athens. Thus, when the Jews had been banished into a distant country, and Jerusalem had been forsaken for seventy years, who would have hoped that it would be built by the citizens themselves?

For this reason Isaiah employs the designations of "deserts of the age, ancient wildernesses, cities of desolation, wildernesses of many ages," in order to shew that all this cannot prevent the Lord from restoring the city to be inhabited by his elect at the proper time. Yet these statements ought also to be accommodated to our time, so that, although the Lord permits his Church, when it has fallen down, to lie long in ruins, and though there is no remaining hope of rebuilding it, yet we may strengthen our heart by these promises; for it is God's peculiar office to raise up and renew what had formerly been destroyed, and devoted as it were to eternal rottenness. But we have formerly treated of these matters at the fifty-eighth chapter.

5. *And strangers shall stand.* He means that foreigners and strangers shall be ready to yield obedience to them; for, in consequence of their being at that time separated from the rest of the nations, none was willing to assist them, and therefore he says that "strangers stand;" that is, are ready to meet and assist them. As to what follows, about "feeding sheep" and "cultivating fields and vines," these are metaphorical expressions; for the Prophet treats of the kingdom of Christ, which is spiritual, but by means of these figures describes its perfect happiness, that we may understand it better from examples drawn from those things which are known to us. Let us therefore understand that we shall be truly happy when Christ shall exercise his dominion over us; for in this way shall we likewise obtain, beyond expectation, many advantages of which the children of Adam are justly deprived.

6. *But ye shall be called the priests of Jehovah.* This verse sheds somewhat more light on the preceding; for in the second part of it the Prophet foretells that believers shall

enjoy the riches of the Gentiles, and shall be raised to glory as their successors. The Jews, indeed, seize eagerly on such declarations, and already devour by covetousness the wealth of all the nations, as if they would one day possess it, and vaunt as if the glory of the whole world would become their own.

But there are chiefly two things that ought to be observed in these words, that we may more fully understand them. First, the prophets, when they wish to describe the glory and happiness of the kingdom of Christ, borrow comparisons from human affairs. Secondly, when they speak of the Church, they connect the Head with the members in such a manner that sometimes they look more at the Head than at the members. We must not understand the enjoyment of the wealth of others to mean that they who are converted to Christ shall seize on the wealth, or glory, or rank of others, which is most inconsistent with true religion; but because all things shall be brought under the dominion of Christ, so that he alone shall hold authority and rule. And that is what I have already said, that he looks both at the members and the Head. But when they come into the power of Christ, they are called ours, because Christ possesses nothing separate from his Church.

In the same manner it is said elsewhere, (Is. xlv. 14,) that the enemies of Christ "shall kiss his feet and supplicate pardon," although this is done in the Church, in which they acknowledge Christ and yield to his doctrine. Thus Isaiah shews what the Father will give to the Son, who has lawful authority over the whole world, (Matt. xxviii. 18,) and to whom "all things must be made subject." (Heb. ii. 8.) Yet we must not omit what I mentioned a little before, that God gives large and kind support to his elect in the world, in order that they may feel that their condition is far better than that of unbelievers; for, though they are in want of many things, yet, being content with a little, they cheerfully give thanks to God, so that their hunger is better than all the abundance of unbelievers.

Priests of Jehovah. By this term he shews that the condition of the people shall be far more excellent than for-

merly ; as if he had said, " Hitherto the Lord had chosen you to be his heritage ; but he will adorn you with gifts much more excellent, for he will elevate you to the honour of the priesthood." Although the whole people was " a kingdom of priests," (Ex. xix. 6 ; Deut. xxxiii. 10,) yet we know that the tribe of Levi only discharged this office ; but the Prophet declares that in future it shall be common to all. This was not manifested but under the reign of Christ. The restoration of the Church, indeed, began at the time when the people returned from Babylon ; but at the coming of Christ believers were at length adorned and honoured by this dignity ; for all the saints have been consecrated to Christ, and discharge that office. To this belong the words of Peter, " Ye are a holy nation, a royal priesthood." (1 Peter ii. 9.) What is the nature of this kind of priesthood ought to be carefully observed ; for we must no longer offer to God earthly sacrifices,[1] but men must be offered and slain in obedience to Christ, as Paul declares that he slew the Gentiles by the sword of the Gospel, that thenceforth they might obey the Lord.[2] (Rom. xv. 16.)

Hence infer how childish is the folly of the Papists, who abuse this passage to prove their priesthood ; for the Pope and his lackeys ordain priests to sacrifice Christ, not to teach the people. But Christ offered himself " by eternal redemption," (Heb. ix. 12,) and he alone has once exercised this priesthood, and commands that the priest of the sacrifice shall be offered to us by the doctrine of the Gospel. Those persons, therefore, who usurp this office, and wish to repeat what he has completed, are guilty of sacrilege.

But every person ought to offer himself, (Rom. xii. 1,) and all that he has, in sacrifice to God, that he may exercise this lawful priesthood ; and next, ministers, who have been specially called to this office of teaching, ought to make use of the sword of the word to slay men and consecrate them to God. Lastly, those are lawful ministers who do not of themselves attempt or undertake anything, but faithfully and

[1] " Il ne faut plus offrir à Dieu des bestes brutes." " We must no longer offer to God brute beasts."

[2] See our author's exposition of that remarkable passage.—*Ed.*

diligently execute the commands which they have received from God.

7. *Instead of your shame.* He confirms the former statement, in which he said that believers who, clothed with sackcloth and covered with ashes, mourned, shall be sprinkled with the oil of gladness. This change of mourning into joy is again promised.

There shall be a double reward. Some interpret the word *double* as meaning that they who have been redeemed by God shall be happy both before God and before men. But I do not know that there are solid grounds for that interpretation. I choose rather to adopt a more simple view; as if the Prophet had said, "The prosperity of the Church shall be so great as to go far beyond all the calamities and afflictions by which she is now oppressed." If, therefore, she is now weary of her condition, she ought to look to that day when she shall be most happy, as Paul contrasts "an eternal weight of glory" with "the momentary lightness of afflictions." (2 Cor. iv. 17.)

And instead of disgrace they shall rejoice in their portion. Wicked men vaunt over us and indulge in wantonness, because they think that they have the superiority; but the Lord promises that ere long he will cause good men, rescued from their tyranny, to obtain their portion. This began to be done, indeed, when the people returned from captivity; but a clearer proof has been exhibited in Christ, and is exhibited every day, and will at length be completed at his last coming, when all things shall be fully renewed, and the wicked shall be thrown down, that we may obtain the inheritance of the world. This is the reason why he says, by way of acknowledgment, that the earth is the portion of those wicked men; for they now boast that they are the lords of the world, but they shall at length feel that it belongs peculiarly and specially to the children of God.

And they shall have everlasting joy. This may relate to the outward condition of the Church; for he daily supplies his people with ground of thanksgiving; but as they must also devour many griefs, and are surrounded by manifold sorrow, this prediction is not fulfilled but when joy of spirit

reigns and holds the pre-eminence in our hearts, accompanied by that "peace which (as Paul says) surpasses all understanding," (Philip. iv. 7,) which the children of God alone enjoy when they have the testimony of adoption. He calls it *everlasting*, in order to shew how greatly it differs from the joy of wicked men, which is momentary and quickly passes away, and is even changed into "gnashing of teeth." (Matt. viii. 12.)

8. *For I Jehovah love judgment.* He not only confirms what he promised in the name of the Lord, but likewise exhorts the Jews to repent, and shews whence they ought to expect salvation, and what and how great is the Judge with whom we have to do; for he reasons from the nature of God in what manner they ought to regulate their life, that they may not by their wickedness reject the grace that is offered to them.

Under the word *judgment* he includes all that is just and equitable; for he contrasts this word with the useless inventions of the Jews, by which they thought that they satisfied God, and at the same time concealed their malice. The Lord cares not, as we have often seen, for such masks and vain pretences, but demands true cleanness of heart and hands pure from all unrighteousness. He who wishes to obtain the approbation of God for himself and for all that he does must have an upright heart and an unblemished life.

And hate robbery in the burnt-offering. By a single part he figuratively denotes all hypocritical worship of God; and under "burnt-offering" is included every kind of sacrifice. Nothing is more abominable than when men, from cheating and robbery, sacrifice to God, or when they mingle their lies, hypocrisy, and impurity of heart, with their sacrifices, or corrupt the worship of God by basely defrauding him. This vice abounds not only in a single age, but at all times; for all men pretend to worship God, and even the wicked are ashamed of not having an appearance of religion, the impression of a Divine Ruler being so deeply engraven on the hearts of all that it cannot be erased. Yet the greater part of men sport with God, and endeavour to satisfy him by childish trifles.

Isaiah therefore condemns and abhors this hypocrisy, and teaches that the Lord demands from us "mercy rather than sacrifice." (Hos. vi. 6; Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7.) We cannot worship God in a right manner, if we do not observe the Second Table, and abstain from all dishonesty and violence; for he who defrauds or injures his neighbours does violence also to God. In a word, the design of the Prophet is to teach what is the true character of repentance; namely, when, laying aside hypocrisy, and dismissing all inventions, the worshippers of God cherish natural kindness to one another.

And I will establish their work in truth. Some explain it to mean the "reward" of work. But I rather think that it denotes all the undertakings of life, to which the Lord promises a prosperous issue. The undertakings of men succeed very ill; because they do not choose to ask counsel of God, or attempt anything under his guidance. Thus they are justly punished for their rashness; because they trust in their own counsels, or depend on a blind stroke of fortune, in which there is no reality whatever, but only a deceitful shadow. But that they who are guided by the Spirit of God, and who commit themselves wholly to his protection, should succeed prosperously and to their wish, is not at all wonderful; for all prosperity flows from his blessing alone.

By the word *truth* is meant a uniform course; for even unbelievers are often puffed up with transitory joy, but it speedily vanishes away.

And will make an everlasting covenant with them. In the conclusion of the verse he assigns the cause of the stability. It is because God is pleased not once only to stretch out his hand to them, but to be the continual guide of the journey. And the true support of our perseverance is, that he deigns to enter into an everlasting covenant with us, in which he voluntarily makes himself our debtor, and freely bestows upon us all things, though he owes us nothing whatever.

9. *And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles.* Here the Prophet treats more clearly of the extension of the Church, which at that time might be said to be confined within a narrow corner of the earth, and afterwards, as we

have already seen, was exceedingly diminished and impaired. (Isa. i. 9 ; x. 22.) Isaiah therefore discourses concerning the Church, which, after having suffered so great a diminution, would be spread throughout the whole world, so as to be visible to all the nations. And yet this did not happen even in the reign of Solomon, when the Jews flourished most in wealth and splendour. (1 Kings x. 21, 27.) Now this appeared to be altogether incredible ; and that is the reason why the prophets take such pains to convince men of it, and repeat it very frequently, that the Jews may not measure this restoration by their own understanding or by the present appearance of things.

A question now arises, When did these things happen ? I reply (as I have often done before) that they began when the people returned to their native country ; for at that time, and in uninterrupted succession, they experienced the manifold kindness of God towards them. But as nothing more than feeble sparks appeared, the full brightness shone forth in Christ, in whose reign those things are entirely accomplished ; for where there was the utmost barrenness of godliness, the offspring of Abraham sprouted, because foreigners were ingrafted by faith into the elect people. Thus foreign and barbarous nations acknowledged that the Jews were the blessed seed of God, (Gen. xxii. 18,) when they united with them in the same confession of faith ; nor was this fulfilled but once only, but is in course of being fulfilled every day.

As to the Jews going before, and holding the first rank in God's covenant, this ought to be ascribed to the mercy of God, and not to their own excellence, as Paul (Rom. iii. 2) teaches ; for, after having shewn that by nature they differ nothing at all from the Gentiles, and after having subjected them to the same condemnation, he likewise teaches that they hold this privilege of pre-eminence, because they were the very first that received the word of God and the promises. But this proceeded from God's undeserved kindness, and not from their merits or excellence.

10. *Rejoicing I shall rejoice in Jehovah.* He represents the Church as giving thanks to God, in order to convince them more fully of the truth of what he formerly said. It

may be regarded as (ὑποτύπωσις) a lively description, by which the thing is, as it were, painted and laid before the eyes of men, so as to remove all doubt; for by nature we are prone to distrust, and so fickle, that we place confidence rather in the inventions of men than in the word of God. As to this form of confirmation, we have spoken at chap. xii. 1; xxvi. 1, and at other passages.

For he hath clothed me. These things were still, indeed, at a great distance, but must have been seen and understood by the eyes of faith; as the eyes should undoubtedly be raised to heaven, when the Prophet discourses concerning salvation and righteousness. Nothing is visible here, and much less could so great happiness have been perceived by the senses, while everything tended to destruction. But because even now we do not see any such beauty of the Church, which is even contemptible in the eyes of the world under the revolting dress of the cross, we need faith, which comprehends heavenly and invisible things.

With the garments of salvation. He connects "righteousness" with "salvation," because the one cannot be separated from the other. "Garments" and "mantles" are well-known metaphors. It is as if he had said, that righteousness and salvation had been bestowed upon them. Since the Lord bestows these benefits, it follows that from him alone we should seek and expect them.

He hath adorned me. The metaphor is supposed to be drawn from priestly ornament; and accordingly there are some who speculate here about the priesthood of Christ. But I do not think that the Prophet spoke so ingeniously; for he brings forward the comparison of the bridegroom and the bride.[1] Formerly the Church lay in filth and rags, and was universally despised, as a forsaken woman; but now, having been received into favour with her husband, she shines with amazing lustre. A parallel passage occurs in Hos. ii. 20. This was accomplished at the coming of Christ;

[1] "'As a bridegroom halloweth himself with ornament,' that is, maketh himself respectable, as a priest in his secret vestments."—*Stock.* "The reference is, no doubt, to the sacerdotal mitre, which was probably regarded as a model of ornamental head-dress, and to which פְּאֵר (*pĕār*) is explicitly applied."—*Alexander.*

but it is also bestowed upon us daily, when the Lord adorns his people with righteousness and salvation. But all these things, as we have often said already, shall be accomplished at Christ's last coming.

11. *For as the earth putteth forth.* By a beautiful comparison the Prophet confirms the former promises; for he reminds the Jews of the ordinary power of God, which shines brightly in the creatures themselves. The earth every year puts forth her bud, the gardens grow green after the sowing time, and, in short, herbs and plants, which appear to be dead during the winter, revive in the spring and resume their vigour. Now these are proofs and very clear illustrations of the divine power and kindness toward us; and since it is so, ought men to doubt of it? Will not he who gave this power and strength to the earth display it still more in delivering his people? And will he not cause to bud the elect seed, of which he promised that it should remain in the world for ever?

Before all the nations. He again shews that the boundaries of the Church shall no longer be as narrow as they formerly were, for the Lord will cause her to fill the whole world.

Will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth. He mentions "righteousness," which was fully displayed when the Lord redeemed his people; but the righteousness of God was chiefly seen, when Christ was manifested to the world; not that God kept his righteousness concealed till that time, but that men did not know it. It is, as if he had said, "God will deliver and restore his people in such a manner that all shall acknowledge him to be righteous." For redemption is a striking proof of the justice of God.

He next mentions *praise;* because such a benefit ought to be accompanied by thanksgiving. The end of "righteousness" is, that glory may be given to God; and therefore he exhorts us to gratitude; for it is exceedingly base to be dumb after having received God's benefits.

CHAPTER LXII.

1. For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that* burneth.

2. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

3. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

4. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

5. For *as* a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee: and *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* shall thy God rejoice over thee.

6. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence;

7. And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

8. The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn *to be* meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

9. But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

10. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the

1. Propter Sion non tacebo, et propter Ierusalem non quiescam, donec egrediatur ut splendor justitia ejus, et salus ejus sicut lampas ardeat.

2. Et videbunt gentes justitiam tuam, et omnes reges terræ gloriam tuam; et vocabitur tibi nomen novum, quod os Iehovæ nuncupabit.

3. Et eris corona gloriæ in manu Iehovæ, et diadema regni in manu Dei tui.

4. Non dicetur tibi amplius Derelicta; nec terra tua dicetur amplius Desolata; quia vocabunt te Beneplacitum meum in ea, et terram tuam Maritatam. Quia beneplacitum Iehovæ in te, et terra tua maritabitur.

5. Quoniam sicut adolescens maritat sibi virginem, ita maritabunt te sibi filii tui; et gaudio sponsi super sponsa gaudebit super te Deus tuus.

6. Super muros tuos, Ierusalem, ordinavi custodes, qui tota die et tota nocte jugiter non tacebunt. Qui memores estis (*vel, memoriam celebrabitis*) Iehovæ, ne silentium sit vobis.

7. Et ne detis silentium illi donec reparet, et donec ponat Ierusalem laudem in terra.

8. Juravit Iehova per dexteram suam, et per brachium roboris sui: Si dedero frumentum tuum amplius cibum inimicis tuis, et si biberint filii alienigenæ vinum tuum pro quo laborasti.

9. Nam qui congregaverunt illud comedent, et laudabunt Iehovam; et collectores ejus bibent vinum in atriis meis sanctis.

10. Transite, transite per portas; repurgate viam populo; complanate,

people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

11. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him.

12. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

complanate iter; sternite lapidibus, levate signum ad populos.

11. Ecce Iehova publicavit usque ad extremum terræ; dicite filiæ Sion, Ecce servator tuus venit, Ecce merces ejus cum eo, et effectus ejus coram ipso.

12. Et vocabunt vos Populum sanctum, redemptos Iehovæ; et te vocabunt Quæsitam urbem, non relictam.

1. *On account of Zion I will not be silent.* That sad captivity being at hand, which was almost to blot out the name of the whole nation, it was necessary to confirm and encourage believers by many words, that with strong and assured confidence they might rely on these promises under the burden of the cross. Here, therefore, the Prophet, discharging that office which had been entrusted to him, openly declares that he will not be slack in the performance of his duty, and will not cease to speak, till he encourage the hearts of believers by the hope of future salvation, that they may know and be fully convinced that God will be the deliverer of his Church. He too might have been dismayed by the unbelief of that people, and might have lost courage when he saw that matters were every day growing worse, and when he foresaw that terrible vengeance. But, notwithstanding so great difficulties, he will still persist in his duty, that all may know that neither the massacre of the people nor their unbelief can prevent God from executing his promises at the proper time.

And on account of Jerusalem I will not rest. It was necessary that these things should be frequently repeated, because such is the depravity of our mind that we speedily forget God's promises. When he says that he will not cease to speak, he likewise reminds others of their duty, that they may take courage, and expect with assured confidence their restoration, though it be long delayed, and even that their unwearied attention may answer to the voice of God which constantly addresses them. We know by experience every

day how necessary this is, while Satan endeavours by every method to turn us aside from the right course.

At the same time he shews what ought to be the aim of godly teachers, namely, to spend and devote themselves entirely for the advantage of the Church; for when he says "on account of Zion," he means that our chief care ought to be that the Church may be preserved, and that none are good and faithful teachers but they who hold the salvation of the Church so dear as to spare no labours. Some explain this as relating to prayer, but I choose rather to refer it to doctrine; and it is more natural to view it as meaning that no inconvenience or annoyance shall wear out his patience, and no opposition shall retard him from proceeding in the office of teaching which God has enjoined on him concerning the redemption of the Church. For if he had survived that very sad calamity, the unbelieving multitude would undoubtedly have persecuted him, as well as the other Prophets, by many reproaches; but whatever may happen, he says that he is fortified by unshaken firmness, never to be dumb through shame, but to proceed with unremitting eagerness in his course. Besides, by this form of expression he procures credit to his predictions, and maintains their authority, so that, even when he is dead, they do not cease to resound in the ears of believers.

Till her righteousness go forth as brightness. By "righteousness" he means the rights of the Church; for during the period of calamity, she appeared to be condemned. Her "righteousness," therefore, "goes forth" when she is perfectly restored, and regains her former condition; for that righteousness lay concealed during the captivity.

And her salvation. To "righteousness" he adds "salvation," because they whom God justifies, or to whom he restores their rights, do likewise regain their "salvation." Hence we infer that we are wretched and without assistance, so long as God withholds his grace from us on account of our sins; and therefore in other passages he frequently gave the appellation of "the righteousness of God" to that which he here affirms to be the righteousness of the Church. Thus we are undone while we are destitute of the righteousness

of God; that is, while we slumber in our sins, and God shews himself to be a severe judge by punishing us for them.

The phrase "go forth" means that the righteousness of the Church was hidden and, as it were, buried for a time: she deserved in the sight of God no favour; but, on the contrary, her unspeakable iniquities prevailed to such an extent that there remained nothing but God's righteous vengeance. But here the Prophet has his eye on men who already looked upon the afflicted Church as lost, and by their pride and reproaches almost cast her down to hell.

May burn like a lamp. Finally, he compares her to the world, and says, that with respect to the world she shall be righteous, when God shall have purged away her sins and undertaken her cause. By these words the Prophet teaches that we ought always to entertain favourable hopes of the restoration of the Church, though she be plunged under thick darkness and in the grave; for although for a time she is overwhelmed and hidden, yet she has God for her avenger in heaven, who, after having chastised her moderately, will at length shew that she was the object of his care. And indeed his righteousness must be illustrious and manifest, and that for the salvation of those whom he hath chosen to be his people and heritage.

2. *And the Gentiles shall see.* He now states more plainly the reason why he formerly said that he would not be silent, namely, that believers may be fully convinced that salvation is not promised to them in vain.

And all the kings of the earth thy glory. Here he employs the word "glory" as meaning "salvation." We see here the argument by which prophets must fortify themselves for perseverance, namely, that the Lord is faithful, and will at length fulfil what he has once promised, though he delay for a time. The word *kings* serves for amplification; as if he had said that not only mean persons and those of the lowest rank shall behold and admire the glory of God, but even "kings" themselves, who commonly look down with contempt on all that was worthy in other respects of being esteemed and honoured; for they are blinded by t

dour, and maddened by their high rank, so that they do not willingly behold any rank but their own.

And thou shalt be called by a new name. By a "new name" he means "a crowded assemblage;" for the people were so completely scattered, that there was no visible body, and they appeared to be altogether ruined. Although a vast multitude of persons were led into captivity, yet, having been scattered among the Babylonians, they were driven about like the members of a body broken in pieces, and scarcely retained the name of a people; which had also been foretold to them. After having been brought back from captivity, they began again to be united in one body, and thus regained the "name" of which they had been deprived. Yet "new" denotes what is uncommon; as if the Prophet had said that the glory of the people shall be extraordinary and such as was never before heard of. We know that this took place in the progress of time; for that small band of people, while they dwelt by sufferance in their native country, could not by any extraordinary distinction arrive at so great renown; but at length, when the doctrine of the Gospel had been preached, the Jewish name became known and renowned.

Which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. He confirms what would otherwise have been hard to be believed, by promising that God will be the author of this glory; for it was not in the power of men thus to raise a Church which had sunk low and was covered with dishonour, but to God, who "lifteth up the poor from the dunghill," (Ps. cxiii. 7,) it was not difficult to adorn his Church by new celebrity. As there was no face of a Church for forty years, and, although the Lord had some seed, yet it was in a state so disordered and so ruinous that there was no visible people of God, he now restores to the Church its name, when he has assembled it by the word of the Gospel. This majestic work of God, therefore, ought to confirm us on this point, that we may know that he will never forsake his Church; and although wicked men tear us by their slanders, and beat and spit upon us, and in every way endeavour to make us universally loathed, let us remember that God is not deprived

of his right to vindicate us in the world, whose names he has deigned to write in heaven.

Others expound the passage in a more ingenious manner, namely, that instead of Israelites they shall be called Christians. But I think that the former meaning is more agreeable to the context and to the Prophet's ordinary language; and we ought carefully to observe those forms of expression which are peculiar to the prophets, that we may become familiar with their style. In a word, the people shall be restored, though it appears to be exterminated, and shall obtain, not from men but from God, a new name.

3. *And thou shalt be a crown of glory.* Isaiah proceeds with the same subject, and we need not wonder at this; for no man, by judging from the flesh, could have formed such vast conceptions and expectations. Besides, he intended to fix the hearts of believers on the kingdom of Christ, which it was the more necessary to adorn and magnify by these illustrious titles, because hitherto it was not only obscure but at a great distance. It was needful to provide against a twofold danger, that the Jews, when they saw that they were still at a very great distance from their former honour, might not, on the one hand, despise the grace of God, or, on the other hand, rest satisfied with the mere beginnings, and thus, by disregarding Christ, devote their whole attention to earthly advantages. The Prophet therefore reminds them, that the return to their native country was but the forerunner of that exalted rank which was to be expected at the manifestation of Christ.

So far as relates to the former clause, exiles and slaves could perceive nothing but ground for despair, when they beheld the outward condition of things, since, after having returned and been restored to their country, they made very little progress in building the temple. Accordingly, he bids them look to God, that they may expect from him the glory which is concealed from the eyes of flesh, and, knowing that they are dear and precious in his sight, may be fully satisfied with this, till he adorn them more bountifully by the hand of Christ.

And the diadem of the kingdom. He calls the Church

God's *crown*, because God wishes that his glory should shine in us; and in this it is proper that we should behold and admire the inconceivable goodness of God, since, notwithstanding that we are by nature filthy and corrupted, and more abominable than the mire of the streets, yet he adorns us in such a manner that he wishes us to be "the diadem of his kingdom." Let us therefore be aroused by this goodness of God to the desire of leading a holy life, that his image may more and more be formed anew in us.

4. *Thou shalt no more be called forsaken.* He meets a difficulty which might occur to the minds of believers, seeing that they were forsaken and abandoned, while at the same time they were called a "diadem" and a "crown." Seeing that they were hated and abhorred by all nations, and sometimes even lay prostrate at the feet of their enemies, and no assistance of any kind was seen, it might appear ridiculous that they should receive these names, and thus be elevated to heaven and placed in the hand of God. He therefore means that the people, though for a time they resemble a divorced and forsaken woman, shall yet be restored so as to change their condition and name; as if he had said, "This divorce shall not be perpetual; God will at length receive thee to himself." Thus, although the Church seems to be "forsaken," and has the appearance of a divorced woman, yet the Lord will put an end to her afflictions and miseries.

For they shall call thee, My good-pleasure in her. He teaches that this proceeds from the "good-pleasure of God;" that is, from his undeserved favour, that nothing may be ascribed to the merits or excellence of men; as he says in Hosea, "I will espouse thee to me in mercy and compassions." (Hos. ii. 19.) And thus he shews that they shall be prosperous for no other reason than because God, out of his infinite goodness, will graciously condescend to receive into favour those whom he had abandoned. Although this relates strictly to the Church, yet let us learn in general that it is by the favour and bounty of God that cities and kingdoms are restored to their former condition, which, while he was angry and offended, appeared to be ruined. The Prophet, therefore, holds out to the consideration of the Jews

the source of all the calamities which they had suffered, when he testifies that when God is reconciled to them, they will be happy; for we may gather from it that formerly God was angry with them, when their condition was wretched and miserable.

And thy land shall be married. This metaphor, by which he denotes the restoration of the people, is highly beautiful, and conveys twofold instruction. He shews that the state of variance between God and the Church shall be terminated; first, because she shall be received as a wife by her appeased husband; and secondly, because the multitude of people will take away the reproach of widowhood. The earth is, in some sense, married to its inhabitants, as trees to vines; and, on the other hand, when it is stripped of its inhabitants, it is said to be a widow.

For the good-pleasure of Jehovah is in thee. He again repeats and confirms what has been already said, that it is owing to the undeserved kindness of God that the Church is restored, that she remains in her condition, that the earth receives its inhabitants; for when God turns away his face and is angry with us, nothing can be looked for but destruction, and nothing can be expected from the aid or strength of men.

5. *For as a young man marrieth a virgin.* This verse contains nothing more than an explanation and confirmation of the preceding verse. Now there appears to be a sort of contradiction in this respect, that in the latter clause he makes God the only Husband of the Church, while in the former clause he assigns to her many husbands. But the solution is easy; for, when this marriage of the Church is spoken of, there is but one Husband, that is, God, who always claims for himself that title; and that is fulfilled in Christ, to whom, as Paul says, the pastors "espouse the Church as a chaste virgin." (2 Cor. xi. 2.) Yet this does not prevent the metaphor of marriage from being employed to describe that unity of faith which all the children of God have with their mother, the Church. Nay more, it is consistent with God being the Husband of his Church, that he marries to his Church all the nations that are assembled to her; for, when she is

without children, she may be said to be widowed and solitary. This is said, therefore, even with respect to God, who, by ratifying with his guidance the sacred amity between the members of his Church, extends the effect of marriage to the whole body.

And hence it ought to be inferred, that the Church of God shall be truly populous, that is, shall have many children, when she is united to God her Husband; for we must begin with God, that he may preside over his Church, and that under his guidance we may be gathered into her bosom; for then shall the marriage be truly sacred. But for this a vast multitude of people will not constitute a church, but rather an abominable brothel; as we see that in Popery there is boasting of the name of God, and yet the majesty of God is dishonoured in it by frightful sacrilege.

6. *On thy walls.* As the Prophet intended to describe the perfect happiness of the kingdom of Christ, so he makes an assemblage of all that belongs to the prosperous condition of any country or city. To other advantages he adds guards and a garrison; because the greatest abundance of all good things would be of little avail, if we were not safe from enemies; and therefore he declares that the Lord will not only supply the Church with all that is necessary, but will also appoint faithful guards to ward off enemies and robbers, that he may thus be recognised, both within and without, as the author of a happy life.

Who shall not be silent. By "being silent," he means "being at rest;" as if he had said, "They will be continually on the watch, so as to foresee at a great distance the dangers that threaten them."

Ye who are mindful of Jehovah. He next explains who these guards are, namely, those who "shall be mindful of the Lord," that is, shall celebrate the memory of his name. Although among the guards we might, without impropriety, reckon the angels, (Ps. xci. 11; Heb. i. 14,) to whom we know that this office is assigned, yet because they willingly and cheerfully watch over the safety of the Church, and do not need to be spurred on by exhortations, the Prophet addresses his discourse to other watchmen.

The word which he employs is of doubtful meaning.[1] Sometimes it signifies "to remember," and sometimes "to bring to remembrance;" and neither of those significations will be inappropriate. But I think that he simply means that these guards will be God's ministers to celebrate his name. Some render it "Making known the Lord;" but that is unnatural, and suddenly breaks off the Prophet's meaning; and such commentators do not attend to the comparison of the guards of a city, which the Prophet employs.

Although the Prophet intends simply to teach that the Church will be safe from all dangers, because she has God to watch over her safety, yet we ought always to consider what is the nature of Christ's kingdom; for it is not defended by the weapons of war or by arms, but, being spiritual, is protected by spiritual arms and guards. The Lord will therefore have his ministers, whose agency he will employ for defending the Church by the sword of the word, that she may be kept safe; not by earthly guards, but by God's secret and spiritual power; and the Prophet explains himself by saying, "Ye who are mindful of the Lord." Although this statement relates to all the godly, who are commanded to celebrate the name of God in all places, as far as lies in their power, yet it is chiefly addressed to the priests, who, discharging a public office, should hold out an example to others, and devote themselves with all their heart to the praises of God.

During the whole day and the whole night. Here pastors are reminded of their duty; for it is not enough to feed the Lord's flock, if they do not likewise defend it from the attacks of robbers and wolves. "Night and day," therefore, they must guard and keep watch, if they wish to perform their duty in a proper manner.

[1] "המזכירים (*hămmăzkīrīm*) admits of three interpretations, all consistent with Isaiah's usage. In chapter xxxvi. 3, 22, it seems to mean an official recorder or historiographer. In chapter lxvi. 3, it means one burning incense as a memorial oblation. Hence אזכרה, (*ăzkārāh*,) the name used in the Law of Moses to denote such an offering. (See Lev. ii. 2; v. 12; xxiv. 7; Numb. v. 26.) In chapter xliii. 26, the verb means to remind God of something which he seems to have forgotten; and as this is an appropriate description of importunate intercession, it is here entitled to the preference."—*Alexander.*

Keep not silence. The Lord forbids them to be silent; for he wishes them to be diligent and attentive; and in this he shews how great is the care which he takes about the safety of the Church. This passage testifies that it is a remarkable kindness of God, when we have faithful pastors who take care of us; for we are exposed to dangers of every kind, and lie open to the snares of Satan, if the Lord do not protect us by his guards; and therefore we ought always to pray that he would surround us with those guards which he sees that we need.

7. *And do not give him silence.* Hitherto the Prophet has spoken of the office and duty of teaching; but as this would not be enough if prayer were not likewise added, he exhorts the ministers of the word to prayer; for I think that לו, (*lō,*) "to him," refers to God. We ought, therefore, to plead with God, and to entreat by earnest prayer, that he will give some success to our labours, which would otherwise be unprofitable. And since we devote ourselves entirely to preaching doctrine, and vigorously oppose all the machinations of Satan, let us learn, at the same time, to turn our minds to God, that he may not permit our labours to be unsuccessful. In the same manner as he applied the word "silence" to doctrine in the beginning of the chapter, when he said, "I will not be silent," so in this passage he applies it to prayer, by which we obtain from God some fruit of doctrine. Even the angels move us by their example to this earnestness of prayer, as we read in Zechariah that the angel prays ardently for the restoration of the Church. (Zech. i. 12.)

Till he restore. Hence infer that there are two distinct benefits: first, to have faithful pastors who shall watch over the safety of the Church; secondly, that the Church be upheld and preserved in her condition by their agency. But God, who speaks here, claims these benefits as his own; which he also does in many other passages. "How shall they preach," says Paul, "unless they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15.) It belongs to God alone, therefore, to appoint pastors; for no man could otherwise have been "sufficient" (2 Cor. ii. 16) for an office so important and so difficult; and it is he alone who promotes by their agency the restoration of the

Church; for their efforts would be altogether vain and fruitless, if the Lord did not grant them prosperous success. And here we see that the external agency of men is joined with the efficacy of the Holy Spirit; for, although the Lord alone is the author and finisher of the work, yet he brings forward instruments which he employs for rearing the building of the Church. This reminds us that we ought not to lose courage, even when we see nothing but ruin and wretchedness and desolation; but it is our duty to pray that the Lord will restore her, which he also promises that he will do.

And till he place Jerusalem a praise. This means to render the Church glorious, that ground of joy may shine forth from it; for when we feel nothing but God's severity, we become dumb, and are overwhelmed with shame; but when he frees us from our afflictions, and causes us to recover, he at the same time opens our mouth; for he supplies us with ground of praise and thanksgiving.

8. *Jehovah hath sworn.* He proceeds with the metaphors which he formerly used; for since, owing to the corruption of our nature, the kingdom of Christ cannot be described so as to be level to our capacity; it was necessary to represent it under figures. In the same manner as he promised, first, an abundance of all things, and next, faithful guardianship, that the condition of believers may be safe; so here he promises tranquillity and repose, that they may peacefully enjoy their blessings, and may not in future be defrauded of them. As if he had said, "Whatever thou hadst formerly in thy hands was exposed to plunder and robbery; but now thou shalt have everything well secured, and shall freely partake of thy corn and thy wine; and, in a word, thou shalt enjoy thy prosperity in peace."

But since the depravity of our nature is such that we do not place trust in God, though he promise largely and bountifully, for this reason the Prophet represents him as swearing; for the Lord condescends to us so far as to make use of an oath, in order to correct still more our unbelief and obstinacy. Now, the Lord "sweareth by himself, because" (as an Apostle says) "he hath none greater than himself." (Heb. vi. 13.)

By his right hand and by the arm of his strength. He mentions his "right arm," that is, the power of God; because that was appropriate to the present discourse. As if he had said, "If I have any power, I will display it in your salvation; and lest, in an arduous affair, your minds should slumber, I swear by my hand, which is invincible and victorious over all, that, whatever difficulties may arise, you shall be safe under my protection." Whenever therefore he promises salvation, let us think of his strength and power.

If I shall give. This is an elliptical form of expression; and we are taught by it the sacredness and solemnity of an oath. The import of this declaration is, as if he had said, that he wishes that henceforth he may not be believed, if these promises be not justified by the event. When he promises the peaceful enjoyment of wheat and wine, he means that it proceeded from his righteous judgment, and did not happen by chance, that the Church was deprived of corn and wine; for whenever enemies ravage and plunder, this is unquestionably done by God's permission; as he threatens in the Law. (Deut. xxviii. 33.) On the other hand, it is his special blessing, that every one eats in safety "under his vine, and under his fig-tree." (1 Kings iv. 25.)

9. *For they who have gathered it shall eat it.* This is an explanation and confirmation of the preceding statement; for, after having testified that he will no longer permit that which the Church possesses to be laid open as a prey, he adds that she shall enjoy her possessions. Yet he shews that "corn and wine" are justly called our own, when we have obtained them by honest industry; for they who violently seize the bread of others, or obtain it by unlawful means, have it not from the Lord, and cannot attribute it to his blessing, as if they possessed it lawfully; and to this corresponds what is said in the Psalm, "Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands, thou shalt be happy, and it shall be well with thee." (Ps. cxxviii. 2.)

And shall praise Jehovah. But when he promises that they who cultivate the soil shall have food, why does he say that they will give thanks to God? And why do men praise God, if by their own labour they gather the corn and

procure the wine? It appears to be but a pretended thanksgiving, if those things are ascribed to the toil and industry of men; and God deserves no praise, if men procure food by their own labour. But it ought to be observed, that the Prophet, after having shewn what is the lawful method of seeking food, at the same time adds that our labour will be fruitless, if the Lord do not supply us with food; for all that we have belongs to God, and to him alone all that we obtain ought to be ascribed.

Shall drink wine in my holy courts. He alludes to the solemn act of offering sacrifices; for they might drink in other places, and every one might eat in his own dwelling. But the allusion is to that ceremony which was observed in consecration, when the law required that the first-fruits should be an oblation, (Lev. ii. 12; xxiii. 10,) in order that the produce of the year might be dedicated to God; and in the writings of Moses we frequently meet with these words, "Thou shalt feast and rejoice in presence of thy God." (Deut. xii. 18.)

10. *Pass through, pass through the gates.* From the preceding statement he draws the conclusion, that there shall be a free passage through the gates of the city, which formerly were shut or in a ruinous state; shut when it was besieged by enemies; in a ruinous state, when the city was thrown down and levelled with the ground. He means that there shall be such a restoration of the city, that its inhabitants shall be numerous, and there shall be frequent passing to and from it.

Some think that these words are addressed to the pastors, that they may enter in at the gates, and go before others as their conductors. But it is a general and figurative statement, by which he compares the Church to a populous city, though for a time it was ruinous and desolate, as Jerusalem had been. Others pursue more ingenious speculations, and say that the gates of a Church are opened, when pardon of sins is proclaimed in it, and by that message God invites all to come to him. But if we wish to get at the Prophet's meaning, we must believe that all these things are spoken figuratively, as we have already mentioned.

Clear the way for the people. This is, strictly speaking, the duty of teachers; but the Prophet speaks in general terms, and addresses all whose agency the Lord employed for preparing the way for the people. At that time, indeed, he spoke to Medes and Persians, by means of whom he opened up the way for the Jews, that they might return to their native country; but next he includes all others by whom the Lord restored his Church.

Level, level the road. He authoritatively commands all men to "clear and level the roads;" that the Jews might know that every obstacle shall easily be removed, and that all men, however inveterate their hostility, shall immediately obey the command of God. In this way he enjoins believers to gird themselves manfully for the work, as if many workmen were ready to give assistance, and the emphatic repetition of the word ("Level, level") deserves notice as intended to express certainty.

Pave it with stones. סקל (*sĭkkēl*) sometimes means to remove stones, and sometimes to pave with stones; and I think that it ought rather to be understood here in this latter signification, though commentators are generally of a different opinion.[1]

Lift up a standard to the peoples. This is of the same import with the former clause; for the Prophet means that the peoples shall obey the command of God, in the same manner as subjects are wont to obey princes; for they shall assemble and run together when "the standard is lifted up," and shall lend their aid to bring back the people; and thus he extols in lofty terms the power of God, that the Jews might be fully persuaded that they would one day be restored.[2]

[1] "The words סקלו מאבן (*sŭkkĕlū mēĕbĕn*) are used elliptically for סקלו הדרך מאבן, (*sŭkkĕlū hădděrĕk mēĕbĕn,*) 'remove the stones from the road;' for סקל, (*sĭkkēl,*) which in general means 'to stone, or to throw stones,' as ויסקל באבנים את דוד, (*văyĕsākkēl bāăbānim ĕth Dāvid,*) (2 Sam. xvi. 6, 13,) here means to take away many stones, as in Isa. v. 2; and מאבן (*mēĕbĕn,*) as Jarchi remarks, is equivalent to מהיות שם אבן, (*mihyōth shām eben,*) 'that there may be no stones there,' at which travellers might stumble. Thus, 'I will make them מאדם, (*mēādām,*) from a man;' that is, that not a man shall be left. (Hos. ix. 12.)"—*Rosenmüller.*

[2] "Here the style of the Prophet is very Pindarical. First, he speaks

11. *Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed.* He means that the Lord, by acting miraculously and beyond the judgment or expectation of the flesh, will cause all the nations to know that this is done by his command. It might be objected, How shall it be brought about that the peoples, who now make fierce resistance to God, shall become obedient to him? He assigns the reason, "Because the Lord will proclaim your return, so that they shall acknowledge that at his command you are restored."

Say ye to the daughter of Zion. Undoubtedly this refers literally to the ministers of the word and to the prophets, whom the Lord invests with this office of promising deliverance and salvation to the Church. And hence we conclude that these promises are not merely limited to a single age, but must be extended to the end of the world; for, beginning at the return from Babylon into Judea, we must advance as far as the coming of Christ, by which this prophecy was at length accomplished, and redemption was brought to a conclusion; for the Saviour came, when the grace of God was proclaimed by the Gospel. In a word, he foretells that the voice of God shall one day resound from the rising to the setting of the sun, and shall be heard, not by a single nation only, but by all nations.

Behold, the Saviour cometh. This is a word which, we know, belongs peculiarly to the Gospel; and therefore he bids the teachers of the Church encourage the hearts of believers, by confirmed expectation of the coming of the Lord, though he appeared to be at a great distance from his people. But this promise relates chiefly to the reign of Christ, by which these things were fully and perfectly accomplished; for he actually exhibited himself as the "Saviour" of his Church, as we have seen before in the fortieth chapter.

to the captives, as if he saw them near the gates of Babylon, and bids them go through them, that is, pass out of the place of their captivity; then, as if he saw workmen in the road, he bids them level the ground, and make it plain, that they may not be tired by ascending and descending steep precipices, nor hurt their feet with sharp stones; then, as if they had not yet received notice of their deliverance, or were not informed of the place where they were to rendezvous, in order to return altogether, he commands a standard to be erected for the people, that is, over their heads, so high that it might be seen by those at the greatest distance."—*White.*

Behold, his reward is with him, and the effect of his work is before him. That they may no longer be distressed by any doubt, when God the Saviour shall appear, he invests him with power, as in Isa. xl. 10; for he repeats the same words which we found in that passage. As if he had said, "As soon as it shall please God to display his hand, the effect will be rapid and sudden; for so long as he stops or delays, the judgment of the flesh pronounces him to be idle;" and we see how very many fanatics imagine some deity that has no existence, as if they were painting a dead image. Justly, therefore, does the Prophet declare that God's "work and reward are before him," that he may make it evident, whenever it shall be necessary, that he is the righteous Judge of the world.

12. *And they shall call you a holy people.* He describes the benefit of the coming of the Lord; that is, because, by shewing that he takes care of his elect as his heritage, he will make it evident to the whole world that the covenant of adoption, which he made with Abraham, was not deceptive. He therefore calls them "a holy people," because the Lord hath separated and consecrated them to himself; for, although he governs all nations, he has deigned to choose the seed of Abraham, that he might make them the object of his peculiar care. (Exod. xix. 6.)

The redeemed of Jehovah. In the sense now stated, God declares that they shall be a holy people, when he shall appear as their Saviour and *Redeemer;* for, as the people are said to be "profaned" when they lie amidst filth, being afflicted and distressed by the reproaches of the wicked, so they are said to be "sanctified," when the Lord actually shews that he presides over their salvation. This was accomplished by a wonderful redemption; and at that time God also testified that he remembered his heritage, which, in the eyes of men, he appeared to have forsaken and disregarded; for in these words, *Sought out,*[1] *not forsaken,* is

[1] "The word דרושה, (*dĕrūshāh,*) the name that shall be given to Jerusalem, is rendered by some *sought after,* that is, a city to which, as being very highly celebrated and visited by crowds of strangers, all shall resort and shall desire to be enrolled among her citizens. Others render it *cared for,* that is, by Jehovah, who appeared to have abandoned and given her up

denoted a contrast between the time when God made a divorce from his people, and the time when he again reconciled to himself those whom he had cast off.

CHAPTER LXIII.

1. Who *is* this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

2. Wherefore *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?

3. I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

4. For the day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

5. And I looked, and *there was* none to help; and I wondered that *there was* none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

6. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

7. I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, *and* the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.

8. For he said, Surely they *are* my people, children *that* will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

1. Quis est iste qui venit ab Edom, rubicundus in vestibus, a Bosra; iste decorus in vestitu suo, gradiens in multitudine virtutis suæ? Ego qui loquor in justitia (*vel, validus*), multus ad servandum.

2. Quare ruber est vestitus tuus, et indumenta tua sicut prementis in torculari?

3. Torcular pressi solus; neque ex populis quisquam fuit mecum. Calcabo enim eos in ira mea, et conculcabo eos in furore meo; et spargetur sanguis eorum super vestes meas, et omnia indumenta mea inquinabo.

4. Quia dies ultionis in corde meo, et annus redemptorum meorum venit.

5. Itaque aspexi, nec erat auxiliator; et admiratus sum, nec erat qui fulciret; itaque salutem mihi fecit brachium meum, et ira mea fulsit me.

6. Et conculcabo populos in ira mea, et inebriabo eos furore meo, et prosternam fortitudinem eorum in terram.

7. Misericordias Iehovæ memoria repetam; laudes Iehovæ tanquam super omnibus quæ contulit nobis Iehova, et multitudine beneficentiæ erga domum Israel, quam contulit illis secundum misericordias suas, et secundum multitudinem miserationum suarum.

8. Nam dixit, Certe populus meus sunt, filii qui non mentiuntur; itaque factus est illis servator.

to forgetfulness, as her citizens complained. (Isa. xlix. 14.) Both agree with what is here added, 'A city not forsaken.' (See Jer. xxx. 14-17.)" — *Rosenmüller*.

9. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

10. But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, *and* he fought against them.

11. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses *and* his people, *saying*, Where *is* he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where *is* he that put his Holy Spirit within him?

12. That led *them* by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

13. That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, *that* they should not stumble?

14. As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest; so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

15. Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where *is* thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

16. Doubtless thou *art* our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, *art* our Father, our Redeemer; thy name *is* from everlasting.

17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, *and* hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

18. The people of thy holiness have possessed *it* but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

19. We are *thine*: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.

9. In omni angustia eorum illi fuit (*vel, Non fuit*); et Angelus faciei ejus servavit eos; in dilectione sua et clementia sua ipse redemit eos; portavit eos et extulit, omnibus diebus seculi.

10. Verum illi rebelles fuerunt, et irritaverunt Spiritum Sanctum ejus. Ideo conversus illis in hostem pugnavit ipse contra eos.

11. Et recordatus est dierum priscorum, quibus Moses fuit cum populo ejus. Ubi est qui ascendere fecit eos e mari, cum pastore gregis sui? Ubi est qui posuit in medio ejus Spiritum suum Sanctum?

12. Qui duxit ad dexteram Mosis brachio magnificentiæ suæ, qui divisit aquas coram ipsis, ad comparandum sibi nomen perpetuum?

13. Qui fecit eos ingredi per abyssos, tanquam equum in deserto, ut non impegerint.

14. Tanquam jumentum in planitiem descendit, Spiritus Iehovæ requiem illi præstitit; sic duxisti populum tuum, ut faceres tibi nomen gloriosum.

15. Aspice e cœlo; vide ex habitaculo sanctitatis et gloriæ tuæ. Ubi zelus tuus, et fortitudo tua? Multitudo viscerum tuorum et misericordiarum tuarum erga me cohibuerunt se.

16. Certe tu pater noster es, etiam si Abraham nesciat nos, et Israel nos non agnoscat; tu tamen pater noster es, redemptor noster; a seculo nomen tuum.

17. Quare fecisti nos errare, Iehova, a viis tuis? Recedere fecisti cor nostrum a timore tuo? Convertere propter servos tuos, ad tribus hæreditatis tuæ.

18. Ad exiguum tempus possederunt populus sanctitatis tuæ; adversarii nostri conculcarunt sanctuarium tuum.

19. Fuimus a seculo, quibus tu non dominatus es, super quos non est invocatum nomen tuum.

1. *Who is this that cometh from Edom?* This chapter has been violently distorted by Christians, as if what is said here related to Christ, whereas the Prophet speaks simply of God himself; and they have imagined that here Christ is red, because he was wet with his own blood which he shed on the cross. But the Prophet meant nothing of that sort. The obvious meaning is, that the Lord comes forth with red garments in the view of his people, that all may know that he is their protector and avenger; for when the people were weighed down by innumerable evils, and at the same time the Edomites and other enemies, as if they had been placed beyond the reach of all danger, freely indulged in wickedness, which remained unpunished, a dangerous temptation might arise, as if these things happened by chance, or as if God did not care for his people, or chastised them too severely. If the Jews were punished for despising God, much more the Edomites, and other avowed enemies of the name of God, ought to have been punished.

The Prophet meets this very serious temptation by representing God the avenger as returning from the slaughter of the Edomites, as if he were drenched with their blood. There is great liveliness and energy in a description of this sort, *Who is this?* for that question raises the hearts of the hearers into a state of astonishment, and strikes them more forcibly than a plain narrative. On this account the Prophet employed it, in order to arouse the hearts of the Jews from their slumbering and stupefaction.

We know that the Edomites were somewhat related to the Jews by blood; for they were descended from the same ancestors, and derived their name from Esau, who was also called Edom. (Gen. xxxvi. 1, 8, 9.) Having corrupted the pure worship of God, though they bore the same mark of circumcision, they persecuted the Jews with deadly hatred. They likewise inflamed the rage of other enemies against the Jews, and shewed that they took great pleasure in the ruin of that people, as is evident from the encouraging words addressed by them to its destroyers. "Remember, O Lord, (says the Psalmist,) the children of Edom, who, in the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, said, Raze, raze it even to

the foundations." (Ps. cxxxvii. 7.) The Prophet, therefore, threatens that judgment shall be passed on the Edomites, that none may imagine that they shall escape punishment for that savage cruelty with which they burned towards their brethren; for God will punish all wicked men and enemies of the Church in such a manner as to shew that the Church is the object of his care.

Beautiful in his raiment. Because spots of blood pollute and stain the conquerors, Isaiah affirms that God will nevertheless be "beautiful in his raiment," after having taken vengeance on the enemies. In like manner, we have seen in other passages (Is. xxxiv. 6) that the slaughter of the wicked is compared to sacrifices, because the glory of God shines brightly in them; for can we conceive of any ornament more lovely than judgment? Thus, in order to impress men with reverence for God's righteous vengeance, he pronounces the blood with which he was sprinkled, by slaying and destroying the wicked, to be highly beautiful and ornamental. As if he had said, "Think not that God will resemble a person of mean rank. Though he be drenched with blood, yet this will not prevent his glory and majesty from shining brightly."

Marching in the greatness of his strength. Various expositions of the word צעה (*tzōgnĕh*) are given by the Jews. Some view it in a transitive sense, as referring to the people whom the Lord brought back from captivity. Others refer it to the nations whom the Lord will remove to another country, though they appear to have a settled habitation. But I consider it to be more agreeable to the context to give to it an absolute sense as a noun. The Prophet, therefore, describes God's majestic march and heroic firmness, by which he displays vast power.

I who speak. The Lord himself replies; and this carries much more authority than if the Prophet spoke in his own person. Believers are reminded by him of former predictions, that they may know that in the judgments of God not only his justice and goodness, but likewise his faithfulness is manifested. As if he had said, "Behold, ye now see fulfilled what I have already and frequently testified to you by my

servants. This effect of my promises clearly shews that I am true, and that I speak justly and sincerely, and not for the purpose of deceiving you." The vision would have been little fitted to strike their minds, if the Jews had not remembered those promises which they formerly heard; but since the design of it was, that they should rely on God's salvation, he at the same time claims for himself no ordinary power to save.

2. *Wherefore is thy raiment red?* He proceeds with the same subject; but, as it would have impaired the force of the narrative, he does not immediately explain whence came the red colour of God's garments, but continues to put questions, that he may arouse their minds to the consideration of what is strange and uncommon. He means that this sprinkling of blood is something remarkable and extraordinary. The comparison drawn from a "wine-press" is highly appropriate; for the town *Bozrah*, which he mentioned a little before, lay in a vine-bearing district. As if he had said, "There will be other vintages than those which are customary; for blood shall be shed instead of the juice of the grapes."

3. *Alone have I pressed the wine-press.* The Prophet now explains the vision, and the reason why the Lord was stained with blood. It is because he will take vengeance on the Edomites and other enemies who treated his people cruelly. It would be absurd to say that these things relate to Christ, because he alone and without human aid redeemed us; for it means that God will punish the Edomites in such a manner that he will have no need of the assistance of men, because he will be sufficiently able to destroy them. The Jews might have objected that the Edomites are powerful, and are not harassed by any wars, but are in a flourishing and tranquil condition. The Prophet shews that this does not prevent the Lord from inflicting punishment on them whenever he shall think proper. Human means were, indeed, employed by him when he took vengeance on the Edomites, but in such a manner that it was made evident to all that it was entirely directed by his hand, and that no part of it could be ascribed to human forces or counsels. They were overwhelmed by sudden and unlooked-for destruction, of

which the people ought not to have doubted that God, who had so often warned them of it, was the author.

And of the peoples there was none with me.[1] This is added in order to intimate that, although "peoples" will arise out of the earth in order to destroy the nation of Edom, yet the work of God shall be separate from them, because nothing was farther from the design of heathen nations than to inflict punishment on the Edomites for their unjust cruelty. For this reason the Lord wishes his judgment to be known and to be illustriously displayed amidst the din of arms and tempestuous commotions.

For I will tread them. I willingly retain the future tense; for the Prophet speaks of events that are future and not yet accomplished; and although the Edomites were living in prosperity and at their ease, yet God would severely punish them on account of their cruelty. Why the Prophet makes use of the metaphor of a bloody wine-press, which is a shocking and melancholy sight, we have already in part explained; but it ought likewise to be added, that the punishments and vengeance which God inflicts on enemies are appropriately called his vintage, as if he gathered them when he ruins or destroys them. In like manner, such punishment is called in another passage (Is. xxxiv. 6) a solemn sacrifice; that we may learn that glory ought to be ascribed to God, not less when he executes his judgments than when he exhibits tokens of compassion.[2]

[1] "Yet he punished the Moabites by means of the Assyrians. How, then, was there none with him? I reply,—1. God distinguishes his work from the work of instruments. He says that he had quite a different end in view from what the instruments had, and therefore that he alone righteously executed this chastisement. 2. He means that this chastisement was of such a nature, so sudden and distressing, that all might see that it did not proceed merely from human counsels and secondary causes, but chiefly from God himself; and consequently that he is the first cause, and the Assyrians are the instrumental cause of the chastisement."—*Pareus.*

[2] "The treading of the wine-press alone is an expression often applied in sermons, and in religious books and conversation, to our Saviour's sufferings. This application is described as customary in his own time by Vitringa, who considers it as having led to the forced exposition of the whole passage by the fathers and Cocceius as a description of Christ's passion. While the impossibility of such a sense in the original passage cannot be too strongly stated, there is no need of denying that the figure may be happily accommodated in the way suggested; as many expressions of the

And I will stain all my raiment. He nevertheless describes his amazing love toward the Jews, in deigning to sprinkle himself with the blood of enemies on their account; and that is the reason why he makes use of the word *stain.*

In my wrath. He shews that this is of itself sufficient for destroying the Edomites, that the Lord is angry with them; as if he had said that there will be none to rescue them, when the Lord shall be pleased to chastise. Hence we may infer that the destruction of men proceeds from nothing else than the wrath of God; as, on the other hand, on his grace alone depends our salvation. In a word, God intended here to testify that the Edomites shall not remain unpunished for having persecuted the Church of God.

4. *For the day of vengeance is in my heart.* In the former clause of this verse Isaiah intimates that God does not cease to discharge his office, though he does not instantly execute his judgments, but, on the contrary, delays till a seasonable time, which he knows well; and that it does not belong to us to prescribe to him when or how he ought to do this or that, but we ought to bow submissively to his decree, that he may administer all things according to his pleasure. Let us not, therefore, imagine that he is asleep, or that he is idle, when he delays.

And the year of my redeemed is come. In this latter clause he shews that all these things are done for the sake of believers. "Day" and "year" are here used by him in the same sense; but by the word "year" is denoted the long duration of the captivity, that the Jews may not despair or grow faint and weary, if the redemption be long delayed. The Lord therefore punishes and destroys wicked men for the purpose of delivering the godly and of redeeming his Church, for which he has a special regard.

Finally, by the slaughter and destruction of them he opens up a way for his grace. And this tends to our consolation,

Old Testament may be applied to different objects with good effect, provided we are careful to avoid confounding such accommodations with the strict and primary import of the passage."—*Alexander.* It may be proper to add that "the exposition of the whole passage" is still the subject of much controversy, and that a full and candid discussion of it by some person of competent learning and ability would do incalculable good.—*Ed.*

that whenever we see tokens of God's wrath toward the wicked, we may know that the fruit of the punishment which they endure will come to us; for in this way it is clearly seen that our groans are heard, and that God, when he wishes to relieve the afflicted, is armed with strength to put to flight all the enemies of his Church. Wherefore, although the cross be heavy to us, yet by bearing patiently let us learn to lift up our minds by hope to that "year" which God hath appointed for executing his vengeance.

5. *I looked, and there was none to help.* Although the Jews were destitute of all assistance, and no one aided them by word or deed, yet he shews that the arm of the Lord is alone sufficient to punish enemies, and to set his people at liberty. He shews, therefore, that from God alone they ought to expect salvation, that they may not gaze around in every direction, but may have their eyes wholly fixed on God, who has no need of the assistance of others.

And I wondered. He represents God as amazed that there is none to stretch out a hand to him, when he wishes to execute his judgments, that he may impress more deeply on the minds of believers this doctrine, that God has no need of human aid, and that he is sufficient of himself for procuring salvation to his people. By this circumstance he magnifies still more the assistance which he had determined to render to his people, partly to correct their distrust, and partly to exhort them to gratitude in future; for God assumes a different character, when he says that he stood like one astonished; because this stupidity belonged literally to the Jews, who scarcely believed what could not be done by the power of men. With every assistance, therefore, he contrasts his own arm, with the invincible power of which he says that he will be satisfied, both that he may be seen to be their Saviour, and that he may scatter and lay low all the wicked.

6. *And I will tread down the peoples.* From the preceding statement he draws the conclusion, that God's wrath is sufficiently powerful to destroy the wicked, without calling for the assistance of others; and he does so in order that the

Jews may not be deterred from cherishing favourable hopes by the strength that is arrayed against them.

And will make them drunk. The expression, "make drunk," must here be taken in a different sense from what it formerly had in some passages. We have seen that sometimes we are made drunk, when God strikes us with fury or madness, (Isa. xxix. 9,) or with a spirit of giddiness, (Isa. xix. 14,) or, in a word, "gives us up to a reprobate mind." (Rom. i. 28.) But here it means nothing else than "to fill," and to strike even to satiety, or, as we commonly say, (*tout leur saoul,*) "to their heart's content;" a metaphor which the prophets frequently employ.

And will cast down their strength to the earth. That is, though they think that they are invincible, yet I will cast down and destroy them. The meaning may be thus summed up. "The Jews, when they are afflicted, must not call in question their salvation, as if God hated them, and must not be amazed at the chastisements which they endure, as if they happened by chance; for other nations, by whom they are now oppressed, shall be punished, there shall be a revolution of affairs, and they shall not escape who chant a triumph before the time. He produces as an example the Edomites, because they were nearer and better known than others, and were also the most injurious.

7. *I will keep in remembrance the compassions of Jehovah.* Isaiah brings consolation to his people in distressed and calamitous circumstances, and by his example bids the Jews, when they were oppressed by afflictions, call to remembrance God's ancient benefits, and betake themselves to prayer; that they may not be like hypocrites, who only in prosperity feel the goodness of God, and are so much cast down by adversity as to remember no benefit. But when the Lord chastises us, we ought to mention and celebrate his benefits, and to cherish better hopes for the future; for the Lord is always the same, and does not change his purpose or his inclination; and therefore if we leave room for his compassion, we shall never be left destitute.

Such appears to me to be the scope of the context, though others view it in a different light, namely, that the Prophet,

having hitherto spoken of the destruction of the people, comforts himself by this confident hope of compassion, that God wishes to save some of them. But they are mistaken in supposing that Isaiah has hitherto spoken of the Jews, as if God punished them only, whereas he testified that he would likewise punish other nations, that they might not think that they alone were hated by God; and accordingly, he now exhorts them to celebrate the remembrance of those benefits which God had formerly bestowed on the fathers, that by their example they may know better the love of God toward them. From the context it will also appear clearly, that the Jews are joined with their fathers, that the covenant which belongs to them in common with their fathers, may encourage them to hope well.

As upon all that Jehovah hath bestowed on us. He employs the particle of comparison, *As*, in order to shew that in adversity we ought instantly to remember those benefits which the Lord bestowed on his people, as if they were placed before our eyes, though they appear to be buried by extreme old age; for if they do not belong to us, the remembrance of them would be idle and unprofitable.

He confirms this also by saying *on us.* Because the Jews were members of the same body, he justly reckons them the descendants of their grandfathers and other ancestors. Isaiah did not, indeed, experience those benefits which he mentions; but because they had been bestowed on the Church, the fruit of them came partly to himself, because he was a member of the Church. And undoubtedly that communion of saints which we profess to believe, ought to be so highly valued by us, as to lead us to think that what the Church has received from the hand of God has been given to us; for the Church of God is one, and that which now is has nothing separate from that which formerly was.[1]

In the multitude of kindness toward the house of Israel.

[1] "Here the Prophet, in the person of a captive Jew, makes a grateful acknowledgment of the manifold mercies bestowed on their nation from the time that he first took them into favour, the thoughts of which served to keep up their spirits, and made them hope that some time or other he would be mindful of them, and redeem them, as he did their forefathers." — *White.*

By these words Isaiah more fully explains his meaning. Since therefore the Lord shewed himself to be kind and bountiful toward his people, we ought to hope for the same thing in the present day, because we are "fellow-citizens," and members of the very same Church. (Eph. ii. 19.) Although we feel that God is angry with us on account of our sins, yet our hearts ought to be encouraged by hope and armed by confidence; because he cannot forsake his Church. Yet it ought to be carefully observed, that the Prophet extols and magnifies in lofty terms the mercy of God, that we may know that the foundation of our salvation and of all blessings is laid on it; for this excludes the merits of men, that nothing may in any way be ascribed to them.

That this doctrine may be better understood, we must take into account the time of which Isaiah speaks. At that time righteousness and godliness chiefly flourished; for although the people were exceedingly corrupted, yet Moses, Aaron, and other good men, gave illustrious examples of unblamable and holy lives. Yet the Prophet shews that all the blessings which the Lord bestowed on Moses and others ought to be ascribed, not to their merits, but to the mercy of God. But what are we in comparison of Moses, that we should deserve anything from God? This repetition, therefore, of *kindness, mercies, and compassions*, as it raises feeble minds on high, that they may rise above stupendous and formidable temptations, ought also to remove and swallow up all thought of human merits.

8. *For he said, Surely they are my people.* He mentions the election of the people, and represents God as speaking of it, that we may keep in view the end of our calling, that he wished to have a peculiar people, who should call upon him. And yet he accuses the people of ingratitude, in having disappointed God of his expectation; not that the Lord can be deceived, for he clearly foresaw what they would become, and also declared it (Deut. xxxii. 15) by Moses; but Scripture speaks in this manner, when it is altogether owing to the ingratitude of men that they disappoint God, as we formerly saw, "I looked that it should yield grapes, and it hath yielded wild grapes." (Isa. v. 4.) Nor does he treat of God's

secret decree, but speaks after the manner of men about the mutual consent between God and believers, that all to whom he deigns to offer himself as their Father, may answer to God when he calls; "for the foundation standeth sure, that none of the elect shall perish, because the Lord knoweth who are truly his. (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

Children that do not lie. We know that the end of our calling is, that we may lead a holy and blameless life, as the whole of Scripture testifies, and as we have often stated at former passages. (Isa. xliii. 21; lv. 5.) Justly, therefore, does the Lord say that he elected the people, that they might be holy and true, that he might have children who were averse to falsehood and vanity. But the people did not keep their promise, and were far removed from that simplicity which they ought to have followed; for everything was full of deceit and hypocrisy. Yet nevertheless he holds out the hope of pardon, provided that they fly to God and humble themselves by sincere repentance.

Therefore he became their Saviour. The Prophet shews what is the chief part of the service of God; namely, to have a pure and upright heart. Hence it follows that God forsakes us, because we are treacherous and are covenant-breakers. Seeing therefore that this people took pleasure in their vices, it was proper first to convict them of their unbelief, that being afterwards converted to God, they might find him to be their Saviour.

9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted.* He enlarges on the goodness of God toward his people, and shews that he was kind to the fathers, so long as they permitted themselves to be governed by him, and was so careful about them that he himself bore their distresses and afflictions. By speaking in this manner, he declares the incomparable love which God bears toward his people. In order to move us more powerfully and draw us to himself, the Lord accommodates himself to the manner of men, by attributing to himself all the affection, love, and (*συμπαθεία*) compassion which a father can have. And yet in human affairs it is impossible to conceive of any sort of kindness or benevolence which he does not immeasurably surpass.

I acknowledge that לֹא (*lō*) with א (*aleph*) literally signifies *not;* and therefore I do not altogether reject a different interpretation, that the people *in their afflictions were not afflicted,* because God always applied some remedy to alleviate their sorrows. But since א, (*aleph,*) in many passages, is manifestly changed into ו, (*vau,*) learned commentators justly, in my opinion, view it as equivalent to the pronoun לוֹ, (*lo,*) *to him.* In this sense the Prophet testifies that God, in order to alleviate the distresses and afflictions of his people, himself bore their burdens; not that he can in any way endure anguish, but, by a very customary figure of speech, he assumes and applies to himself human passions.[1]

And the angel of his face saved them. Of the care which he took of them he next explains the effect, by saying that he always delivered them by the hand of his angel, whom he calls "the angel of his face," because he was the witness of the presence of God, and, as it were, his herald to execute his commands; that we may not think that angels come forth of their own accord, or move at their own suggestion, to render assistance to us; for the Lord makes use of their agency, and makes known to us his presence by means of them. Angels can do nothing of themselves, and give no assistance, except so far as the Lord commissions them "to be ministers of our salvation." (Heb. i. 14.) Let us not, therefore, fix our whole attention on them, for they lead us straight to God.

[1] "In all their distress there was distress to him, or, as the English Version renders it, 'In all their affliction he was afflicted.' This explanation, with the text on which it is founded, and which is exhibited by a number of manuscripts and editions, is approved by Luther, Vitringa, Clericus, Hitzig, Ewald, Umbreit, Hendewerk, and Knobel. It is favoured, not only by the strong and affecting sense which it yields but by the analogy of Judges x. 16; xi. 7, in one of which places the same phrase is used to denote human suffering, and in the other God is represented as sympathizing with it. The objections to it are, that it gratuitously renders necessary another anthropopathic explanation; that the natural collocation of the words, if this were the meaning, would be צַר לוֹ, (*tzăr lō,*) as in 2 Sam. i. 26; that the negative is expressed by all the ancient versions; and that the critical presumption is in favour of the Kethib, or textual reading, as the more ancient, which the Massorites merely corrected in the margin, without venturing to change it, and which ought not to be now abandoned, if a coherent sense can be put on it, as it can in this case."—*Alexander.*

If it be thought preferable to interpret this phrase as describing the lively image of God, because that angel, being the leader and guardian of the people, shewed the face of God as in a mirror, that meaning will be highly appropriate. And indeed I have no doubt that the office of Saviour is ascribed to Christ, as we know that he was the angel of highest rank, by whose guidance, safeguard, and protection, the Church has been preserved and upheld.

In his love. He shews what was the cause of so great benefits; namely, his love and undeserved kindness, as Moses also teaches. "How came it that God adopted thy fathers, but because he loved them, and because his heart clave to them?" (Deut. iv. 37; vii. 7, 8.) Moses wishes to set aside entirely the lofty opinion which they might entertain of themselves, because they were proud and haughty, and claimed more for themselves than they had a right to claim; and therefore he shews that there was no other cause for so great benefits than the absolute and undeserved goodness of God.

He bore them and carried them. He next makes use of the same metaphor which Moses employs in his song, when he says that God "carried his people in the same manner as an eagle bears her young on her wings." (Deut. xxxii. 11.) Or perhaps some may choose to refer it to sheep, as we have seen elsewhere, "He will lead those that are with young." (Isa. xl. 11.) Yet it is more natural to view this as a comparison to a mother, who not only carries the child in the womb, but rears it till it arrive at full strength. The meaning may be thus summed up. "The people experienced the grace of God, not only once, when they were redeemed, but during the whole course of their life, so that to him alone ought to be ascribed all the benefits which they have received." And therefore he adds—

All the days of the age; that is, in an uninterrupted succession of many years; for God is not wearied in doing good, nor is it only to a single age that he shews his kindness; for he has never ceased to adorn and enrich his Church with various gifts.

10. *But they were rebellious.* The Prophet now comes

down to the second clause, in which he states that the Lord ceased to shew kindness to his people, because they revolted, and turned aside from him. The question turns on this point: "God exercised his kindness towards our fathers for a long time; why do not we experience the same kindness? Is he unlike himself?" By no means; but we ourselves, by our rebellion, refuse and even drive away his goodness. Yet the Prophet not only accuses the men of his own age, but likewise condemns former ages. We see how, even when they had Moses for their leader, they murmured against God and rebelled. (Exod. xvii. 2; Num. xi. 1; xx. 3.)

Therefore he became an enemy to them. He shews that the effect of their rebellion was, that God, who had loved them tenderly, yet, in consequence of their obstinacy, "became an enemy to them." Let them accuse themselves, therefore, for suffering the punishment of their transgressions; for God is by nature disposed to shew kindness, and nothing is more agreeable to him than to bestow his favours.

And they provoked his Holy Spirit. We are said to irritate "the Holy Spirit" by our wickedness; and this form of expression, after the manner of men, is intended to produce in us stronger abhorrence against sin, which provokes God's wrath and hatred. Now, since it is the same Spirit that performs the work of our salvation, the Prophet suggests that God is alienated from us by our sins, which break asunder the bond of union. To this belongs the exhortation of Paul, "Grieve not the Spirit of God, by whom ye have been sealed to the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.) It ought also to be observed here, that we have no reason for blaming men, who hate and persecute us, seeing that the Lord makes war with us, and punishes our transgressions by their hand. We ought therefore to accuse and condemn our transgressions; for they are the cause of all the evils which we endure.

11. *And he remembered the days of old.* This is the design of the chastisement, that the people may be roused from their lethargy, and may call to remembrance those things which they had formerly forgotten; for we are so intoxicated

by prosperity that we altogether forget God. And therefore chastisements bring back this thought, which had been defaced in us, "Where is God who bestowed so many benefits on our fathers?" For I refer these things to the past time; and therefore I have translated עולם (*gnōlām*) "of old," and not "of the age," which would be unsuitable to this passage, seeing that he mentions those times in which Moses governed the people of God. Wherefore, the true meaning is, that the Jews, being wretchedly oppressed, thought of "the times of old," in which the Lord displayed his power for defending his people. As to the opinion of some commentators, who refer it to God, as if he contended with the wickedness of the people, because he chose rather to bestow his favours improperly on ungrateful persons, than not to complete what he had begun, it appears to be too harsh and unnatural; and therefore the Prophet rather utters the groans and complaints of a wretched people, when they have learned from chastisements how miserable it is to lose God's protection.

With the shepherd of his flock. By "the shepherd" he means Moses, and I see no good reason for translating it in the plural rather than the singular number.[1]

That put his Holy Spirit in the midst of him. He describes also the manner; namely, that he endowed him with a remarkable grace of the Holy Spirit; for "to put the Spirit in the midst of him" means nothing else than to display the power of his Spirit. Others prefer to view it as referring to the people; and I do not object to that opinion. But when the Lord chose Moses, and appointed him to be the leader of the whole people, in him especially the Lord is said to have "put his Spirit." Now, he gave his Spirit to him for the benefit of the whole people, that he might be a distinguished minister of his grace, and might restore them

[1] Our author refers to a different reading, רעי, (*rōgnē,*) the construct plural, instead of רעה, (*rōgnēh,*) the construct singular of רעה, (*rōgnĕh.*)—*Ed.* "Nearly sixty manuscripts and forty editions read רעי (*rōgnē*) in the plural, which may then be understood as including Aaron, (Psalm lxxvii. 20,) and, as Vitringa thinks, Miriam, (Mic. vi. 4,) or perhaps the seventy elders, who are probably referred to in the last clause as under a special divine influence. (See Num. xi. 17. Compare Exod. xxxi. 3; xxxv. 31.)"—*Alexander.*

to liberty. At the same time, the power of the Spirit of God was seen in the midst of the whole people.

12. *Who led them.* Here he goes on to describe the miraculous deliverance of the people, who were led out of Egypt under the guidance of Moses; and he goes on to relate the complaints which might occur to the minds of the afflicted Jews. Here we see two things connected; namely, *the right hand of Moses* and *the arm of God's majesty.* The Lord employs the labours and ministry of men in such a manner that his praise and glory must not be in any degree diminished or obscured; for, while these things are transacted under Moses as the leader, everything is ascribed to God. Just as, when the ministers of the Gospel are said to "forgive sins," (John xx. 23,) which nevertheless belongs to God alone, does this detract from his authority and majesty? Not at all; for they are only his instruments, and lend their labour to God, to whom the undivided praise ought to be rendered. And indeed, what could the hand of a single man have accomplished, if it had not been wielded by the arm of God?

Accordingly, he expressly adds the design, that God performed miracles at that time, in order that *he might gain for himself an everlasting name;* and if we are not at liberty to deprive him of this, it will not be lawful to transfer to man even the smallest portion of praise.

13. *Who made them walk through the depths.* These things are added for the purpose of setting that benefit in a stronger light. He likewise brings forward comparisons, in order to describe that extraordinary power of God: "*As* a horse in the desert, *As* a beast into a plain;" that is, he led out his people as gently as if one were leading a horse into a plain. By the word "desert" is not meant the wilderness of Paran in which the people dwelt forty years; but, in accordance with the ordinary usage of the Hebrew tongue, it denotes pasture, in which herds and flocks wander at large. This is still more evident from the following verse,—

14. *As a beast into a plain.* Here, instead of "desert," he makes use of the word "plain;" and the same meaning is drawn from what he says, that "the people walked through

the depths *without stumbling*, as horses are wont to do in the desert." In a word, he informs them that the Red Sea was no obstacle to the people marching through the midst of the depths, as if they were walking on level ground.[1]

A glorious name. This is in the same sense that he called it a little before "an everlasting name." The people now argue with God, that if he once wished to obtain "a glorious name," he must not now throw away all care about it; otherwise the remembrance of the benefits which he formerly bestowed on the fathers will be entirely blotted out.

15. *Look down from heaven.* After having, in the name of the whole people, related the benefits of former times, he now applies this to the present subject, and entreats the Lord to pay regard to his people.

Behold from the habitation of thy holiness. By these words he means that the power of God is not diminished, though this does not always appear; for we must supply a contrast, that God at that time might be said to be concealed, and did not shew himself to them as he had shewn himself to the fathers. "Although, therefore, we do not see thee, O Lord, and although thou hast withdrawn from us as if thou wert shut up in heaven, so that thou mayest seem to have altogether ceased to care about us, yet 'look down from heaven, and from thy habitation' behold our distresses." Believers must differ from unbelievers in acknowledging a powerful and kind God, even when they perceive no tokens of his power or kindness; and thus, even when he is at a great distance, they nevertheless call on him; for God never ceases to care about his people, (1 Peter v. 7,) since he governs unceasingly every part of the world.

Where is thy zeal? By these questions believers appear in some measure to reproach God, as if he were not now moved by any affection toward them, or as if his power were

[1] "In these three verses the Prophet sets forth the care he had of his people, leading them as it were by his hand, that they might not fall and hurt themselves, dividing the Red Sea before them, and conducting them as safely through the dangerous passage, as a horse which treads on plain even ground is in no danger of falling, or as a beast heavy laden goes down a steep precipice warily, with a great deal of caution every step it takes; so the Lord led his people gently through the wilderness, and caused them at last to rest in the pleasant valleys of Canaan."—*White.*

diminished; but the Prophet's meaning is different; for in thus extolling those benefits, his object is, as I have already remarked, to confirm the hope of believers for the future, that they may know that God is always like himself, and will never lay aside his care about his people. This will appear more clearly from what follows.

The multitude of bowels and of compassions denotes God's vast goodness; for God displays and opens up his bowels, so to speak, when he exercises toward us bounty and kindness, which truly is so great that we cannot praise it in adequate language. Nor is it a new thing that believers, when oppressed by grief, expostulated familiarly with God for shutting up his bowels. They do indeed hold by this principle, that God is always compassionate, because he does not change his nature; and though they impute it to their sins that they do not experience him to be compassionate, yet, that they may not sink into despair, they ask how it is possible that God should treat them with severity, and, as if he had forgotten his natural disposition, should shew nothing but tokens of absolute displeasure?[1]

16. *Surely thou art our Father.* God permits us to reveal our hearts familiarly before him; for prayer is nothing else than the opening up of our heart before God; as the greatest alleviation is, to pour our cares, distresses, and anxieties into his bosom. "Roll thy cares on the Lord," says David. (Ps. xxxvii. 5.) After having enumerated God's benefits, from which his goodness and power are clearly seen, so that it is evident that it is nothing else than the sins of men that hinder them from feeling it as formerly, he returns to this consideration, that the goodness of God is nevertheless so great as to exceed the wickedness of men. He calls God a *Father* in the name of the Church; for all cannot call him thus, but it is the peculiar privilege of the Church to address him by a father's name. Hence it ought to be inferred that Christ, as the first-born, or rather the only-begotten Son of God, always governed his Church; for in no other way than through him

[1] Luther's version runs thus,—Deine große herzliche Barmherzigkeit hält sich hart gegen mich. "Thy great compassionate loving-kindness deals hardly with me."—*Ed.*

can God be called Father. And here we again see that believers do not contend with God, but draw an argument from his nature, that, by conquering temptation, they may strive to cherish good hope.

Though Abraham do not know us. Here a question arises, Why does he say that the patriarch does not know the people? Jerome thinks that this is done because they were degenerated, and therefore were unworthy of so high an honour; but that interpretation appears to me to be exceedingly unnatural. The true meaning is, "Though our fathers deny us, yet God will reckon us as children, and will act toward us as a Father."

They who say that Abraham and other believers care no more about the affairs of men, torture by excessive ingenuity the words of the Prophet. I do not speak of the fact itself, but I say that those words do not prove that the saints have no care about us. The natural and true meaning is, "O Lord, that thou art our Father will be so sure and so firmly established, that even though all parentage and all relationship should cease among men, yet thou wilt not fail to be our Father. Sooner shall the rights of nature perish than thou shalt not act toward us as a Father, or the sacred adoption shall be infringed, which was founded on thy unchangeable decree, and ratified by the death of thine only-begotten Son."[1]

Yet we may infer from this that holy men present themselves before God, and pray to him, in such a manner as not to look at any intercessions of others; for they are commanded to pray so as to rely on God's fatherly kindness, and to lay aside every other confidence. And if the Prophet did not instruct the Jews, in order that God might listen to

[1] "The meaning cannot be that Abraham and Israel are ashamed of us as unworthy and degenerate descendants, as Piscator understands it; or that Abraham and Israel cannot save us by their merits, as Cocceius understands it; or that Abraham and Israel did not deliver us from Egypt, as the Targum understands it; or that Abraham and Israel, being now dead, can do nothing for us, as Vitringa and the later writers understand it. The true sense of the verse, as it appears to me, is that the Church or chosen people, although once, for temporary reasons, co-extensive and coincident with a single race, is not essentially a national organization but a spiritual body. Its father is not Abraham or Israel, but Jehovah, who is and always has been its Redeemer, who has borne that name from everlasting."—*Alexander.*

them, to turn their mind to Abraham and Jacob, to whom promises so numerous and so great had been given, assuredly much less ought we to resort to Peter, and Paul, and others; for this is not a private prayer offered by a single individual or by a few persons, but the public and universal prayer of the whole Church, as if the Prophet laid down a general form. Besides, our confidence ought to be founded on God's favour and kindness as a Father, so as to shut our eyes on all the intercessions of men, whether living or dead. In a word, believers profess that they do not gaze around in all directions, but rely on God alone.

It comes now to a question, Why did he pass by Isaac and mention in a special manner Abraham and Jacob? The reason is, that with those two persons the covenant was more solemnly ratified. Isaac was, indeed, a partaker of the covenant, but did not receive promises so large and so numerous.

Our Redeemer. Redemption is here described as a testimony of that adoption; for by this proof God manifested himself to be the Father of the people; and therefore boldly and confidently do believers call on God as their Father, because he gave a remarkable testimony of his fatherly kindness toward them, which encouraged them to confidence. But redemption alone would not have been enough, if a promise had not likewise been added; and therefore, as he once redeemed them, he promised that he would always be their Father.

From everlasting is thy name. By the word "everlasting"[1] is pointed out the stability and continuance of his fatherly name, for we did not deserve the name of children; but his will, by which he once adopted us to be children, is unchangeable. Since, therefore, the Lord has an eternal name, it follows that the title and favour which are connected with that eternity and flow from it, shall be durable and eternal.[2]

17. *Why didst thou cause us to wander, O Jehovah, from thy ways?* Because these modes of expression appear to be

[1] "De tout temps." "Of all time."
[2] "Dureront à jamais." "Shall endure for ever."

rough and harsh, some think that unbelievers are here introduced as murmuring against God and uttering blasphemies, with the rage and obstinacy of men who are in a state of despair. But the connection in which these words occur does not at all admit of that interpretation; for the Prophet points out the fruit that would result from the calamities and afflictions of the Jews, because, having been subdued and tamed, they no longer are fierce or indulge in their vices. They are therefore ashamed that in time past they departed so far from the right way, and they acknowledge their own fault.

And indeed when they trace their sins to the wrath of God, they do not intend to free themselves from blame, or to set aside their guilt. But the Prophet employs a mode of expression which is of frequent occurrence; for in the Scriptures it is frequently said that God drives men into error, (2 Thess. ii. 11;) "gives them up to a reprobate mind," (Rom. i. 28;) and "hardens them." (Rom. ix. 18.) When believers speak in this manner, they do not intend to make God the author of error or of sin, as if they were innocent, or to free themselves from blame; but they look higher, and rather acknowledge that it is by their own fault that they are estranged from God and deprived of his Spirit, and that this is the reason why they are plunged into every kind of evils.

Those who say that God leads us into error by privation, that is, by depriving us of his Spirit, do not perceive the actual design; for God himself is said to harden and to blind, when he gives up men to be blinded by Satan, who is the minister and executioner of his wrath. Without this we would be exposed to the rage of Satan; but, since he can do nothing without the command of God, to whose dominion he is subject, there will be no impropriety in saying that God is the author of blinding and hardening, as Scripture also affirms in many passages. (Rom. ix. 18.) And yet it cannot be said or declared that God is the author of sin, because he punishes the ingratitude of men by blinding them in this manner.

Thus believers here acknowledge that God has forsaken

them, but that it is by their own fault;[1] and they acknowledge God's righteous vengeance against them. In like manner, when Moses says that "God hath not hitherto given to the people eyes to see and a heart to understand," (Deut. xxix. 4,) he does not lay the blame on God, but reminds the Jews whence they should seek to obtain a remedy for that stupidity of which they had been convicted. Yet it may appear as if here they aimed at something else, by inquiring into the cause and remonstrating with God, that he ought to have acted differently towards them and treated them less harshly. But I reply, that believers always look at the goodness of God, even when they acknowledge that they suffer justly on account of their sins.

Some refer these words to the captivity; as if believers complained that God permitted them to languish so long in captivity. As if he had said, "The chief cause of their obstinacy is, that the Lord does not permit them to partake of his grace." Believers are troubled by a dangerous temptation, when they see wicked men pursuing their career without being punished, and are almost driven by it to despair; as it is beautifully expressed by David. (Ps. cxxv. 3.) But I think that the Prophet's meaning is more general; for believers acknowledge that they "wandered," because they were not governed by the Spirit of God; and they do not expostulate with God, but desire to have that Spirit, by whom their fathers were guided, and from whom they obtained all prosperity.

And hast caused our heart to depart from thy fear. תקשיח, (*tăkshīăch,*) is rendered by some, *hast hardened;* but as that would not agree with the words, "*in thy fear,*" I have preferred to translate it, "Hast caused to depart;" for קשח, (*kāshăch,*) also signifies "to remove and place at a distance."

Return on account of thy servants. Some think that these words relate to the whole people, as Scripture frequently gives the appellation of "servants of God" to all the citizens of the Church. But I think that they relate literally to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that is much more proba-

[1] "Mais leur peché en est cause." "But their sin is the cause of it."

ble; not that the people relied on their intercession, but because the Lord had made a covenant with them, which they should transmit from hand to hand to their posterity. Thus they do not hold out these patriarchs as men, but as ministers and depositaries or messengers of the covenant which was the foundation of their confidence. In the same manner, in that psalm, "Lord, remember David," (Ps. cxxxii. 1,) the name of the dead patriarch is mentioned to God, not because the saints thought that he would be their intercessor, but that the promise given to a single individual, as to establishing the kingdom in his family for ever, belongs to the body of the people.

The Papists eagerly seize on these words, as if they were a proof of the intercessions of the saints. But how easy it is to reply may be easily seen from the true interpretation; for the fathers are mentioned, not because they had a right to obtain anything for them, or because they now intercede, but because with them was formed a gracious covenant, which belongs not only to themselves, but to all their posterity.

To the tribes of thine inheritance. I have added the preposition *To*, which was understood, in order that the meaning might be more easy and obvious. It is a customary form of expression among the Hebrews, "Return the tribes," instead of "Return to the tribes;" as if he had said, "Return to a state of friendship with thy people." Hence it is evident that what was formerly said had no other object than that the people urged God to the exercise of mercy by representing to God their distresses and calamities. And in this manner we must come to God; that is, by recounting former benefits and laying before him our afflictions, if we desire to be delivered from them.

He employs the word *Inheritance*, because God hath chosen that people to be his heritage; as if he had said, "Where shall thy people be, if we perish?" Not that the Lord was bound to that people, but that he had given his promise to them.[1] Accordingly, the people venture to remind God of his promise and to offer earnest prayer, because he had

[1] "Mais d'autant qu'il leur avoit juré fidelité." "But because he had sworn to be faithful to them."

laid himself under a voluntary obligation both to the fathers and to posterity. Now, since all the promises are ratified and confirmed in Christ, (2 Cor. i. 20,) and since we possess the reality of all things, we ought to be fortified by stronger confidence; for not only was the covenant made in his hand, but it was ratified and sealed by his blood. To the ancient fathers also he was indeed the Mediator, but we have everything clearer and plainer; because they were still kept amidst the darker shadows.

18. *For a little time.* It is wonderful that the people should call it "a little time;" for fourteen hundred years had elapsed since *the people began to possess* that land. But we must take into account the promise by which he said that the seed of Abraham should have it as an everlasting inheritance; and therefore that was a short time, when compared with eternity. (Gen. xvii. 8; xlviii. 4.) Believers, therefore, represent to God the shortness of that time; not that they accuse him of insincerity, but that he may remember the promise and covenant, and may have more regard to his own goodness than to the chastisements which they justly deserved. Thus the ancient Church complains that "her strength was weakened in the journey, that her days were shortened, and prays that she may not be cut off in the middle of her course," (Ps. cii. 23, 24,) that is, because the fulness of age depended on the coming of Christ.

Our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary. This was a much heavier complaint, that wicked men had profaned the land which the Lord had consecrated to himself. Undoubtedly this was far more distressing to the people than the rest of their calamities, and justly; for we ought not to care so much about ourselves as about religion and the worship of God. And this is also the end of redemption, that there may be a people that praises the name of the Lord and worships him in a right manner.

19. *We have been of old.* The words of the Prophet admit of two meanings. Some view this passage in such a light as if the people argued with God on this ground, that they were elected at that time when the rest of the nations were rejected, and that this covenant was ratified "from of old,"

that is, for a long period. Another meaning, which I prefer, is this, that the people argue with God, and complain that they seem as if they did not differ at all from unbelievers; that is, because they receive from him no assistance or relief in adversity, which is unreasonable and improper. This statement is remarkable and worthy of notice; for, whenever we are oppressed beyond measure with adversity, we are permitted to complain to God, and to represent to him our calling, that he may render assistance, and shew how wide a difference there is between us and strangers.

On whom thy name hath not been called. This is of the same import with what goes before; for it means that the calling of God must not be made void. And indeed the Lord does not wish that we should call upon him in vain; for prayers would be unprofitable and useless, if the Lord took no care of us. Now, the Church is distinguished by this mark, that "his name is called upon her." Unbelievers cannot call upon him; for there is no access to him but through the word, of which they have no knowledge; and therefore, wherever there is faith, there is also calling on him; and if there be no faith, it is certain that there is no hope or confidence.

CHAPTER LXIV.

1. Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence;

2. As *when* the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil; to make thy name known to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may tremble at thy presence!

3. When thou didst terrible things *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

4. For since the beginning of the world *men* have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, *what* he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

1. O si (*vel, Si fortè*) disrumpas cœlos; descendas, et a facie tua montes diffluant!

2. Tanquam incendio ignis liquefactionum, ignis aquas ebullire fecit, ad manifestandum nomen tuum hostibus tuis; a facie tua gentes tremebant.

3. Cum faceres terribilia, quæ non expectavimus, descendisti; a facie tua montes defluxerunt.

4. A seculo non audiverunt, neque auribus perceperunt; oculus non vidit Deum præter te, qui faciat (*vel, Deus quæ facit*) expectanti se.

5. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness; *those that* remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

6. But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7. And *there is* none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

8. But now, O Lord, thou *art* our Father: we *are* the clay, and thou our potter; and we all *are* the work of thy hand.

9. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we *are* all thy people.

10. Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

11. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

12. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these *things*, O Lord? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

5. Occurristi lætanti et facienti justitiam. In viis tuis recordabantur tui; ecce tu iratus es, et nos peccavimus; in ipsis seculum, et salvabimur (*vel, saluti sumus*).

6. Et fuimus quasi immundus nos omnes, et tanquam vestimentum inquinatum omnes justitiæ nostræ. Et decidimus instar folii omnes nos; et iniquitates nostræ, quasi ventus, abstulerunt nos.

7. Non est qui invocet nomen tuum, nec qui se excitet ut te apprehendat; quia abscondisti faciem tuam a nobis, et tabescere nos fecisti in manu iniquitatis nostræ.

8. Et nunc, Iehova, tu es pater noster; nos lutum, et tu figulus noster; opus, inquam, manuum tuarum sumus omnes.

9. Ne irascaris, Iehova, ultra modum; ne in seculum memineris iniquitatis. Ecce respice, quæso; nos omnes populus tuus sumus.

10. Urbes sanctitatis tuæ fuerunt desertum; Sion desertum fuit, Ierusalem solitudo.

11. Domus sanctuarii nostri, et gloriæ nostræ, in qua te celebrarunt patres nostri, fuit in combustionem ignis; et omnia nostra desiderabilia in vastationem.

12. An super his te continebis, Iehova? Tacebis, et affliges nos ultra modum?

1. *O that thou wouldest rend the heavens!* The particle לוּא (*lū*) appears to me, in this passage, to denote a wish; for, although it has many significations, yet the context shews that this signification is more appropriate to this passage than any other. Here believers burst forth into earnest prayer, as usually happens, when in sore adversity we do not find plain terms to be sufficiently forcible for our purpose.

God is said to "rend the heavens," when he unexpectedly gives some uncommon and striking proof of his power; and the reason of this mode of expression is, not only that men, when they are hard pressed, commonly look up to heaven,

from which they expect assistance, but that miracles, by interrupting the order of nature, open up for themselves an unusual path. Now, when God renders no assistance, he appears to be shut up in heaven, and to disregard what is taking place on earth. For this reason he is said to open and "rend the heavens," when he holds out to us some testimony of his presence; because otherwise we think that he is at a great distance from us.

That thou wouldest come down. This expression, like the former, is adapted to the estimation of our flesh; for God does not need to move from one place to another, but accommodates himself to us, that we may understand those subjects better.[1] (Gen. xi. 5; xviii. 21.)

Let the mountains flow down. That is, "Let thy majesty be openly displayed, and let the elements, struck by the perception of it, yield and obey." (Ps. xviii. 11.) This will appear more plainly from what immediately follows.

2. *As by the burning of a melting fire,*[2] *the fire hath made the water to boil.* All this might be read either in the future or in the subjunctive; as if he had said, "O Lord, if thou camest down, the nations would tremble at thy presence; thine enemies would instantly be melted away." But I think that the translation which I have given is more simple; for it is very certain that the Prophet here alludes to Mount Sinai, where the Lord openly revealed himself to the people. Hence we see also the gross absurdity of the division of this chapter;[3] since those events are related in support of that prayer which ought rather to have been placed at the beginning of the chapter.[4]

We have formerly seen that the prophets, when they re-

[1] "Afin que nous comprenions mieux ce qui nous est dit de luy." "That we may understand better what is said to us about him."

[2] "Comme par feu ardent qui fait fondre." "As by a burning fire that melteth."

[3] Calvin alludes to the fact, that, in the Hebrew Bible, the last verse of chapter lxiii. corresponds to what usually is the first verse of chapter lxiv. For the convenience of the reader, I have exchanged the author's arrangement for that which is followed in the English version.—*Ed.*

[4] "I have followed our common version, the LXX., Vulgate, and Syriac, in departing from the Masoretic division of the chapters, according to which the words ('O that thou wouldst,' &c.) are very improperly made to conclude chapter lxiii."—*Henderson.*

late that God assisted his people, bring forward an instance in the history of redemption.[1] Whenever therefore the prophets mention this history, they include all the benefits that were ever bestowed by God on his people; not only when he delivered them from the tyranny of Pharaoh, when he appeared to them in Mount Sinai, but also when, during forty years, he supplied them with all that was necessary in the wilderness, when he drove out their enemies, and led them into the possession of the land of Canaan. In a word, they include all the testimonies by which he formerly proved himself to be gracious to his people and formidable to his enemies.

He says that "the melting fire made the waters boil," because, contrary to custom, fire and lightning were mingled with violent showers; as if he had said that the fire of God melted the hardest bodies, and that the waters were consumed by its heat. To the same purpose is what he adds, that "the mountains flowed at his presence;" for he opened up a passage for his people through the most dreadful obstacles.

3. *Terrible things which we did not look for.* He says that the Israelites saw what they did not at all expect; for, although God had forewarned them, and had given them experience of his power in many ways, yet that alarming spectacle of which he speaks goes far beyond our senses and the capacity of the human mind.

4. *From of old they have not heard.* This verse confirms what has been already said, that believers do not here ask anything strange or uncommon, but only that God may shew himself to be to them what he formerly shewed himself to be to the fathers, and that he may continue to exercise his kindness, and that, since he has been wont to assist his people, and to give them undoubted tokens of his presence, he may not cease in future to cause his strength and power to shine forth more and more brightly. He represents believers as praying to God in such a manner that they strengthen themselves by the remembrance of the past, and

[1] "En l'histoire de la deliverance d'Egypte." "In the history of the deliverance from Egypt."

betake themselves with greater courage to God's assistance.

Eye hath not seen a God besides thee. The Prophet's design unquestionably is, to celebrate God's immense goodness, by relating the numerous benefits which he bestowed upon his people in ancient times; and this kind of praise is highly magnificent, when, rising to rapturous admiration of them, he exclaims that there is no God besides him, and that those things which the Lord has carried into effect for the sake of his people are unheard-of and uncommon. But there are two ways in which these words may be read, for אֱלֹהִים (*ĕlōhīm*) may either be in the accusative or in the vocative case. "O Lord, no one hath seen besides thee what thou doest for them that wait for thee." But another reading is more generally approved, "No one hath ever seen or ever heard of such a God." Yet in this reading we must supply the particle of comparison, *as;* for otherwise the sentence would be incomplete. The verb יַעֲשֶׂה (*yăgnăseh*) is put absolutely, "No ear hath heard, and no eye hath seen, such a God *as* doeth such things." And thus God is distinguished from idols, from which superstitious men imagine that they obtain all good things; for they are the mere inventions of men, and can do neither good nor harm, seeing that God bestows on his worshippers benefits of every kind.

Paul appears to explain this passage differently, and to torture it to a different purpose, and even quotes it in different words, that is, because he followed the Greek version. (1 Cor. ii. 9.) In this respect the Apostles were not squeamish; for they paid more attention to the matter than to the words, and reckoned it enough to draw the attention of the reader to a passage of Scripture, from which might be obtained what they taught. As to the addition which Paul appears to have made of his own accord, "Nor hath entered into the heart of man what God hath prepared for them that love him," he did so for the purpose of explanation; for he added nothing that does not fully agree with the Prophet's doctrine.

That we may understand better how thoroughly he agrees with the Prophet, we must understand his design. In that passage he treats of the doctrine of the Gospel, which he

demonstrates to surpass the capacity of the human understanding; for it contains knowledge that is widely different and far removed from the perception of our flesh, and, in short, is "hidden wisdom," so that Paul is justly led to view it with astonishment. And as the Prophet, when he takes into consideration the wonderful acts of God's kindness, exclaims, like one who is lost in amazement, that nothing like this was ever heard of; so, in the most excellent of all benefits, namely, that in which Christ is offered to us by the Gospel, we may exclaim in the same manner, "O Lord, what thou bestowest on thy people exceeds all the capacity of the human mind: no eye, no ear, no senses, no mind can reach such loftiness." Thus Paul applies this passage admirably to his reasoning, and does not make an improper use of the statement made by the Prophet when he elevates above the world that peculiar grace which God bestows on his Church.

There remains but one difficulty, namely, that Paul applies to spiritual blessings what the Prophet here says about blessings of a temporal nature. But we may say that Isaiah here looks merely at the cause of God's benefits, though he has in his eye the condition of the present life; for all the benefits that we receive from God, for the sake of food and nourishment, are proofs of his fatherly kindness toward us; and it is the peculiar excellence of faith, to rise from visible favours to those which are invisible. Although therefore the Prophet appears to speak of external deliverance and other benefits of this life, yet he rises higher, and looks chiefly at those things which belonged especially to the people of God. What stupidity would it be, if, while we enjoy God's benefits, we did not consider the fountain itself, that is, his fatherly kindness! Ordinary favours are enjoyed indiscriminately by the good and the bad; but that favour with which he embraces us belongs especially to citizens. The consequence is, that we do not merely observe those things which fall under the senses of men, but contemplate the cause itself. Although therefore neither eyes nor ears reach so far as to comprehend the grace of adoption, by which the Lord testifies that he is our Father, yet he reveals it by the testimony of his Spirit.

It is even probable that the Prophet, when he spoke of a particular instance of God's kindness, was elevated, by means of it, to a general reflection; for, in considering God's works, it was frequent and customary for good men to pass from a single instance to the whole class. In that way might this single but remarkable instance of the divine goodness raise the mind of the Prophet to so high a pitch as to meditate on that infinite abundance of blessings which is laid up for believers in heaven. We even see clearly that this commendation includes the gracious covenant by which God adopted the children of Abraham into the hope of eternal life. (Gen. xvii. 7.) What has been said amounts to this: "Seeing that the goodness and power of God are so great, we have no reason to distrust him; but we ought to place our confidence in him, so as to hope that he will assuredly assist us." And such is the design of those excellent benefits which are here mentioned by the Prophet.

5. *Thou hast met.* He proceeds with the same subject; for the people deplore their hard lot, that they feel no alleviation in their adversity, although formerly God was wont to stretch out the hand to the fathers. Believers, therefore, speak in this manner: "Thou wast wont to meet our fathers; now thy face is turned away from us; and thou appearest to be irreconcilable, because we gain nothing by calling on thee. Whence comes this diversity, as if thy nature had been changed, and thou wert now different from what thou hast been?" They next add, and make an acknowledgment, that they are punished justly, because "they have sinned." I have formerly stated that nothing is better in adversity than to remember God's benefits, and not only those which we have ourselves experienced, but likewise those which are related in Scripture; for we cannot be armed by a stronger shield against temptations of every kind.

This verse, in my opinion, is inaccurately explained by those who think that we ought to read those words as closely connected, *Him that rejoiceth and doeth righteousness*, as if he had said, "Thou hast met them that willingly serve thee, and whose highest pleasure is to do what is right." I think that *rejoicing* denotes here those who were glad in prosperity;

for at that time the people were in sadness and mourning. There is an implied contrast. "Formerly thou wast wont to meet the fathers, before they were distressed by any affliction, and to cheer them by thy approach; now thou art far distant, and permittest us to languish in mourning and grief."

In thy ways they remembered thee. In accordance with what he has now said, he adds that they "remembered God," because they enjoyed his present grace, and felt that he was the author and director of their salvation; and so by "the ways of God," he means prosperity; either that in this way he was near to them, when he treated them softly and gently as his children, or because God is by nature inclined to acts of kindness. But since he said that God was wont to "meet him that doeth righteousness," the "remembrance" may relate to the practice of piety, that is, that they devoted themselves earnestly to the worship of God; and so it will be an explanation of the former clause, for the prophets frequently confirm by a variety of expressions what they have formerly said. To "remember" God, is to be captivated by the pleasant remembrance of him, so that we shall desire nothing more, and to place all our happiness in him. There is nothing that delights us more than the remembrance of the mercy of God; and, on the other hand, if we feel that God is angry, the mention of him fills us with alarm.

And we have sinned. The reason is assigned; for, when they find that God is so unlike what he formerly was, they do not murmur against him, but throw all the blame on themselves. Let us learn from this, that we ought never to think of the chastisements which the Lord inflicts, without at the same time calling to mind our sins, that we may confess that we are justly punished, and may acknowledge our guilt.

In them is perpetuity. In this passage עולם (*gnōlām*) denotes nothing else than "long duration;" but it may refer either to "sins" or to "the ways of the Lord." To sins it may refer in this way, "Though we obstinately persisted in our sins, and deserved that thou shouldst destroy us a thousand times, yet hitherto we have been saved by thy mercy."

If we understand it to relate to "the ways of the Lord," it will assign the reason why the people did not perish, because "the ways of the Lord" are steadfast and perpetual, and his mercy never comes to an end; and that meaning appears to me to agree best with this passage. Some supply the words, that "the age," or "perpetuity," is founded on the ways of the Lord. But I prefer to take the words in their literal acceptation, as when David says that the Lord "is not angry but for a moment," (Ps. xxx. 5,) that he is easy to be reconciled, and always compassionate; for his anger is not suddenly kindled, or with immoderate rage, after the manner of men, but he is unchangeable in benevolence and favour.

And we shall be saved, or, *we have been saved.* We have not yet got at the whole of the Prophet's statement; for he says that the people "are saved," although they had been led into captivity, as into a grave, and deplored their calamity. On that account I consider the preterite to be put for the future, for it is rather a wish or a prayer than an affirmation. Nor do the saints boast that they have obtained salvation, but, deploring their misery, they betake themselves to God's everlasting mercy; and consequently, they praise that which they wish, and not that which they have already obtained.

6. *We have all been as the unclean.* The believers go on in their complaint; for they deplore their condition, because God appears to take no account of them. Hebrew writers are not agreed as to the meaning of the words בגד עדים (*bĕgĕd gnĕddīm.*)[1] Yet it is certain that it denotes something which is vile and worthless, and which, on account of its filthiness, stinks in the noses of men. But here two things ought to be observed; first, that believers confess their guilt, and are justly punished for it; and, secondly, that they never-

[1] "Vitringa and Gessenius dwell with great zest and fulness on the strict sense of בגד עדים (*bĕgĕd gnĕddīm.*) Some understand the comparison with withered leaves as a part of the description of their sin, while others apply it to their punishment. The first hypothesis is favoured by the difference of the tenses; the last by the parallelism of the clauses. It is probable, however, that here, as in chap. i. 4, the two things run together in the writer's mind, and that no refined distinction as to this point was intended."—*Alexander.*

theless complain of the severity of the punishments which they endure, not to blame God, but to move him to compassion; just as a culprit, when he endeavours to mitigate the severity of a judge, lays before him his own distresses and calamities. Some commentators torture this passage, by alleging that the Prophet, when he speaks of the pollutions of sins, describes all Jews without exception, though there still remained some of them who were sincere worshippers of God. But there are no good grounds for this; for the Prophet does not speak of individuals, but of the whole body, which, being trodden under foot by all men, and subjected to the utmost indignity, he compares to a filthy garment.

There are some who frequently quote this passage, in order to prove that so far are our works from having any merit in them, that they are rotten and loathsome in the sight of God. But this appears to me to be at variance with the Prophet's meaning, who does not speak of the whole human race, but describes the complaint of those who, having been led into captivity, experienced the wrath of the Lord against them, and therefore acknowledged that they and their righteousnesses were like a filthy garment. And first, he exhorts them to a confession of their sin, that they may acknowledge their guilt; and next, that they should nevertheless ask pardon from God, the manner of obtaining which is, that, while we complain that we are wretched and distressed, we at the same time acknowledge that we are justly punished for our sins.

And we all fade as a leaf. This is a very beautiful comparison, which shews that men utterly fade and decay when they feel that God is angry with them; as is admirably described in Psalm xc. 6; ciii. 16.[1] Justly, therefore, are we compared to leaves; for "our iniquities, like the wind, carry us away."

7. *There is none that calleth on thy name.* He confirms what was formerly said; for he exhorts believers, even though God's punishment of them appears to be severe, still to believe that they deserve such a punishment. Heinous

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, vol. iii. p. 210.

sins are mentioned by him; and though it would be tedious to go over all of them in detail, he points out the fountain itself, and says that the worship of God is neglected. Under the word "calleth on," he includes, as is customary in Scripture, the whole worship of God; for the most important part of God's worship is, to "call upon" him, and to testify our confidence in him. Prayers and supplications, undoubtedly, were always practised among them; but, because the heart was far removed, he reckons all pretended ceremonies as of no value.

Or that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee. He now explains more clearly the former clause, by saying that no one earnestly applies his mind, or gives his endeavour to seek God, but that all are consumed and wasted away through their own slothfulness. And first, he shews that nothing is more desirable than to be perfectly joined to God; for, when we are alienated from him, everything must go ill with us. We are indolent and sluggish by nature; and therefore we need to have spurs applied to us. Seeing that by nature we indulge our slothfulness, we must listen to the advice of the Prophet so as not to become utterly stupid; for otherwise he in his turn will reject us, or contemptuously drive us away. The Prophet describes the miserable condition of the people, in which there was no desire to seek God, and no means were used to stir up the heart to godliness.

Thou hast made us to languish. They again complain that they are overwhelmed by the severity of distress, and obtain from God no alleviation; for Isaiah asserts these things in the name of the whole people, and prays to God not to permit them any longer to languish amidst so great miseries.

8. *And now, O Jehovah.* After having complained of their miseries, by which they were almost overwhelmed, they now more openly ask pardon from God and a mitigation of their distresses, and with greater boldness plead with God that still they are his children. Adoption alone could encourage them to cherish favourable hopes, that they might not cease to rely on their Father, though overwhelmed by the load of afflictions. And this order should be carefully observed; for, in order that we may be truly humbled in our hearts, we

need to be cast down, and laid low, and almost crushed. But when despair seizes us, we must lay hold on this altar of consolation, that, "since God has been pleased to elect us to be his children, we ought to expect salvation from him, even when matters are at the worst." Thus, with a view to the gracious covenant, the Israelites affirm that they are the children of God, in order that they may experience his fatherly kindness, and that his promise may not be made void.

We are the clay, and thou our potter. By means of a comparison they magnify the grace of God, and acknowledge that they were formed of despicable clay; for they do not seek the ground of superiority in themselves, but in their origin celebrate the mercy of God, who out of mean and filthy clay determined to create children to himself.

We all are the work of thy hands. Of the same import as the former is this second clause, in which God is called the Creator, and his people are called the work of his hands; because to God alone they ascribe all that they are and all that they have. This is true gratitude; for, so long as men advance the smallest claim to anything as their own, God is defrauded of his right. Now, Isaiah speaks not of the ordinary creation of men, but of regeneration, on account of which believers are especially called "the work of God;" as we have frequently stated in the exposition of other passages.[1] Here they acknowledge a remarkable act of God's kindness, in having elected them to be his people, and adorned them with benefits so numerous and so great.

9. *Be not angry, O Jehovah, beyond measure.*[2] The people pray that the severity of punishment and the fierceness of the wrath of God may be abated; not that God goes beyond measure, but because they would be altogether overwhelmed,

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, vol. ii. pp. 26, 83, 121, 264; vol. iii. pp. 132, 318, 338.

[2] "'Be not angry, oh Jehovah, to extremity.' The common version of עַד מְאֹד (*gnăd mĕōd*) (very sore) fails to reproduce the form of the original expression, as consisting of a preposition and a noun. This is faithfully conveyed in Lowth's version, (to the uttermost,) and still more in Henderson's, (to excess;) although the latter is objectionable as suggesting the idea of injustice or moral wrong, which is avoided in the version above given."—*Alexander.*

if he should choose to act toward them with the utmost strictness of justice. They therefore ask a mitigation of punishment; as Jeremiah also says, "Chasten me, O Lord, but in judgment," (Jer. x. 24,) that is, moderately; for he draws a contrast between "judgment" and "wrath;" as it is elsewhere said that God chastises us "by the hand of man," (2 Sam. vii. 14,) because he does not put forth the power of his hand to punish us, lest we should be utterly destroyed.

Neither remember iniquity for ever. It deserves notice that they do not absolutely shrink from the judgment of God, or pray that they may wholly escape from it, but present themselves to be corrected, so as not to faint under the strokes. And this is the reason why they desire to have the remembrance of their iniquities blotted out; for, if God do not mercifully pardon them, there will be no end of the chastisements.

We all are thy people. The Prophet repeats what he said a little before, that God elected the family of Abraham; because the best ground for the confident expectation of obtaining pardon was, that God, who is true to his promises, cannot cast away those whom he had once elected. By employing the word *all*, he does not speak of each individual, as I formerly remarked, but includes the whole body of the Church. Although the greater part had withdrawn through wicked revolt, yet still it was true that the Jews were God's peculiar people; and this prayer was offered, not for every one of them without distinction, but only for the children of God who were still left.[1] The people do not plead their own merits before God, but betake themselves to the covenant of free grace, by which they had been adopted. This is the sure and only refuge of believers, this is the remedy for all evils; and that is the reason why Moses and the other prophets repeat it so frequently. (Exod. xxxii. 13.)

10. *The cities of thy holiness.* The Church again recounts her miseries, that she may move God to mercy and obtain pardon. She says that the cities have been reduced to "a wilderness;" and, for the sake of amplification, adds that

[1] "Mais seulement pour la petite troupe des fideles." "But only for the small company of believers."

"*Zion* is a desert;" because it was the royal residence, in which God wished that men should call upon him. She adds also *Jerusalem*, in which Zion was; for it appeared to be shameful that a city, which God had consecrated to himself, should be ruined and destroyed by enemies.

She calls them "cities of holiness," because, as the Lord had sanctified a people, so he also wished that the cities, and even the whole country, should be consecrated to himself. Seeing, therefore, that the cities were dedicated to God, they are justly called "cities of his holiness;" for in them God reigned, and men called upon him. In the same manner we may at the present day give the appellation of "cities of God's holiness" to those which, laying aside superstitions, worship him in a sincere and right manner.

11. *The house of our sanctuary and of our glory.*[1] It is called "the sanctuary of the people" in a different sense from that in which it is called "the sanctuary of God;" for, being the testimony of a sacred union between God and the people, it is often called "God's holy house;" that is, because it corresponds to his holiness. But now, in a passive sense, believers call it "their sanctuary," because from it they must seek their sanctification.

This is more plainly confirmed by the words, "of our glory." They acknowledge that they have nothing in which they ought to glory, except the temple, in which God wished to be adored and worshipped. And yet we see that this glorying was often without foundation, and for that reason was reproved by Jeremiah, "Trust not in words of falsehood, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are we." (Jer. vii. 4.) But while the glorying of those who were proud and insolent on account of empty titles was without foundation, yet true and well-grounded was the glorying of those who embraced with the heart the Lord's ordinance, and, relying on the testimony of his word, knew that they dwelt under the shadow of him who had reared for himself a constant dwelling-place in the midst of them; for the temple was built by the command of

[1] "Our holy and our beautiful house."—(Eng. Ver.) "Our house of holiness and beauty."—*Alexander.*

the Lord, so that the Jews might justly glory in having God for the protector of their salvation.

In which our fathers praised thee. Because the worship of God was at that time corrupted and adulterated, and almost all had revolted to superstition and ungodliness, for this reason he mentions not the present but the former age. As if he had said, "Though we have not rendered to thee such worship as we ought to have rendered, yet this is the temple in which our fathers worshipped thee in purity; wilt thou permit it to be profaned and destroyed? Will not this disgrace recoil on thyself, since it relates to the worship of thy name?" Here the Jews say nothing about their life, and bring forward no excuses, and rather confess their guilt, but offer their worship to God, that he may be mindful of his covenant, and not allow his promises to be made void. This example ought to be imitated by all believers. The word "praise" denotes thanksgiving; as if he had said, "In that temple, the melancholy ruins of which draw forth mourning and tears from all believers, the praises of God at one time resounded, when he treated his people with kindness and gentleness."[1]

12. *Wilt thou restrain thyself for these things, O Jehovah?* The people strengthen themselves by assured confidence, that God will not permit his glory to be trampled under foot, though men provoke him by innumerable transgressions. This can yield no consolation of any kind to hypocrites, but relates solely to those who are moved by a true sense of the mercy of God. Such persons believe and are fully persuaded, though death threaten them, that God will nevertheless have regard to his own glory, and will at least be gracious to the remnant, that the seed may not perish.

And wilt thou afflict us beyond measure?[2] He shews that

[1] "They press him closer still, and make use of an argument which was most likely to affect him. The temple wherein our pious fathers praised thee, the beautiful sanctuary in which thy honour used to dwell, is burnt with fire; the precious materials it was made of are nothing but rubbish and dust."—*White.*

[2] "That is, Canst thou hold out against so many moving considerations? Is it possible that thou canst behold thy children in chains, thy city in ruins, thy temple a heap of stones, and not be prevailed on to pity and put an end to our great afflictions?"—*White.*

it is impossible for God not to be mindful of his mercy; for "he cannot deny himself." (2 Tim. ii. 13.) But our salvation is connected with his glory. This ought to be carefully observed; for, after having spoken of the glory of God, he adds, "Thou wilt not afflict us beyond measure." The Lord will therefore restrain his chastisements; for his glory, which he cannot disregard, is deeply involved in our deliverance from death. To this prayer, therefore, let us betake ourselves whenever we are attacked by our enemies; not in the manner of hypocrites, (who haughtily boast of the glory of God, of which they have no experience whatever,) but with repentance and faith, that we may actually obtain the fruit of that glory.

CHAPTER LXV.

1. I am sought of *them that* asked not *for me;* I am found of *them that* sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* was not called by my name.

2. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way *that was* not good, after their own thoughts;

3. A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;

4. Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments; which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable *things is in* their vessels;

5. Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These *are* a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

6. Behold, *it is* written before me; I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

7. Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed

1. Patefeci me iis qui non interrogabant, inventus sum ab iis qui non quærebant me; dixi, Ecce ego, ecce ego, ad gentem quæ non invocabat nomen meum.

2. Expandi quotidie manus meas ad populum rebellem, gradientes via non bona post cogitationes suas.

3. Populus qui me irritat semper in faciem meam, qui sacrificat in hortis, et suffitum facit super lateres.

4. Qui manent in sepulchris, in desertis pernoctant, qui comedunt carnem suillam, et jus pollutorum in vasis eorum.

5. Qui dicunt, Mane apud te, ne accedas ad me, quia sanctificarem te, (*vel, sanctior sum quam tu;*) isti fumus in furore meo, ignis ardens tota die.

6. Ecce scriptum est coram me; non tacebo, quin reddam et rependam in sinum eorum.

7. Iniquitates vestræ et iniquitates patrum vestrorum simul, dicit Iehova. Quia suffitum fecerunt in montibus, et super colles probro me

me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

8. Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing *is* in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

9. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

10. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

11. But ye *are* they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink-offering unto that number.

12. Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose *that* wherein I delighted not.

13. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

14. Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.

15. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

16. That he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

17. For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the

affecerunt, ideo remetiar opus eorum vetustum in sinum eorum.

8. Sic dicit Iehova, Quemadmodum si quis inveniat mustum in botro, et dicat, Ne perdas illud, quoniam est benedictio in eo; ita faciam propter servos meos, ut non perdam totum.

9. Et educam ex Iacob semen, et ex Iuda hæredem montium meorum; et hæreditate obtinebunt eam electi mei, et servi mei illic habitabunt.

10. Et erit Saron habitaculum pecudum, et vallis Achor ad accubitum armenti, populo meo qui quæsiverunt me.

11. At vos desertores Iehovæ, qui obliviscimini montes sanctitatis meæ; qui paratis exercitui mensam, et impletis numero libamen.

12. Itaque numerabo vos ad gladium, et omnes in cædem corruetis; eò quòd vocavi, nec respondistis; loquutus sum, nec audivistis; fecistisque malum in oculis meis; et in quibus voluptatem non cepi, elegistis.

13. Propterea sic dicit Dominus Iehova, Ecce servi mei comedent, et vos esurietis. Ecce servi mei bibent, et vos sitietis. Ecce servi mei lætabuntur, et vos erubescetis.

14. Ecce servi mei jubilabunt præ hilaritate cordis, et vos clamabitis præ dolore cordis, et præ angustia spiritus ululabitis.

15. Et relinquetis nomen vestrum in execrationem electis meis; interficiet te Dominus Iehova, et servos suos vocabit nomine alio.

16. Qui benedixerit sibi in terra, benedicet se in Deo veraci; et qui juraverit in terra, jurabit in Deo veraci; quia oblivioni traditæ sunt afflictiones priores, et absconditæ ab oculis meis.

17. Quia ecce ego creabo cœlos novos, et terram novam; priorum

former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

18. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

20. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, *being* an hundred years old, shall be accursed.

21. And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them;* and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

22. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

24. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

25. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

non erit memoria, neque in cor ascendent.

18. Sed gaudete et exultate in perpetuum iis quæ ego creo. Nam ecce ego creo Ierusalem exultationem, et populum ejus gaudium.

19. Et exultabo in Ierusalem, et gaudebo in populo meo; nec audietur in ea amplius vox fletus et vox clamoris.

20. Non erit illic amplius infans dierum nec senex qui non impleat dies suos. Quoniam filius centum annorum morietur adolescens, et qui peccat filius centum annorum maledicetur.

21. Ædificabunt domos, et inhabitabunt; plantabunt vites, et comedent fructum earum.

22. Non ædificabunt ut alius inhabitet; non plantabunt ut alius comedat; quoniam secundum dies arboris, dies populi mei; et opus manuum suarum perpetuabunt electi mei.

23. Non laborabunt frustra, nec parient in terrore; quoniam semen benedictorum Iehovæ erunt et soboles eorum cum ipsis.

24. Et erit, antequam clament ego exaudiam; adhuc illis loquentibus ego audiam.

25. Lupus et agnus pascentur simul; et leo sicut bos comedet paleam; et serpenti pulvis erit panis suus. Non affligent, neque nocebunt in universo monte sancto meo, dicit Iehova.

1. *I have manifested myself.* The Prophet now passes on to another doctrine; for he shews that God has good reason for rejecting and casting off the Jews. It is because they have profited nothing by either warnings or threatenings to be brought back from their errors into the right way. But that they might not think that the Lord's covenant would on that account be made void, he adds that he will have another people which formerly was no people, and that where he was formerly unknown, his name shall be well known and highly celebrated. The Jews looked on this as monstrous, and

reckoned it to be altogether inconsistent with the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, (Gen. xvii. 7,) if such a benefit were extended to any others than his posterity. But the Prophet intended to strip them of the foolish confidence of imagining that God was bound to the posterity of Abraham; for the Lord had not restricted himself to them but on an absolute condition, and if this were violated by them, they would be deprived, like covenant-breakers and traitors, of all the advantage derived from the covenant. Nor was this promise made to Abraham alone, and to those who were descended from him, but to all who should be ingrafted by faith into his family. But it will be more convenient to begin with the second verse, in which he explains the cause of the rejection, that we may more fully understand the Prophet's design.[1]

2. *I have stretched out my hands.* He accuses the Jews, and complains of their ingratitude and rebellion; and in this manner he proves that there is no reason why they should say that the Lord does them wrong if he bestow his grace on others. The Jews conducted themselves proudly and insolently toward God, as if they had been elected through their own merit. On account of their ingratitude and insolence the Lord rejects them as unworthy, and complains that to no purpose did he "stretch out his hands" to draw and bring them back to him.

By "the stretching out of the hands" he means the daily invitation. There are various ways in which the Lord "stretches out his hands to us;" for he draws us to him, either effectually or by the word. In this passage it must relate chiefly to the word. The Lord never speaks to us without at the same time "stretching out his hand" to join us to himself, or without causing us to feel, on the other hand, that he is near to us. He even embraces us, and shews the anxiety of a father, so that, if we do not comply with his invitation, it must be owing entirely to our own fault. The heinousness of the guilt is greatly aggravated by long continuance, that, during a long succession of ages,

[1] The remainder of our author's exposition of the first verse will be found at p. 379.—*Ed.*

God did not cease to send one Prophet after another, and even, as he says elsewhere, to rise early in the morning and continue the same care till the evening. (Jer. vii. 13; xi. 7; xxxv. 14.)

To a rebellious people. First, he calls them "rebellious" or disobedient, but immediately afterwards he declares what is the nature of that rebellion, namely, that the people *walk after their own thoughts.* Nothing is more displeasing to God than for men to be (αὐθάδεις) "self-willed," (2 Peter ii. 10;) that is, devoted to their own inclinations; for he commands us to surrender our own judgment, that we may be capable of receiving the true doctrine. The Lord therefore testifies that it was not owing to him that he did not retain and continue to exercise towards them his wonted favour, but that they alienated themselves through their own madness, because they chose to abide by their own natural inclinations rather than to follow God as their leader.

Having pointed out the cause of this rejection, we must come to the calling of the Gentiles, who succeeded in the room of the Jews; for that is undoubtedly the subject treated in the first verse. The Lord had long ago foretold it by Moses, so that they ought not to have thought that there was anything new in this prediction. "They have provoked me by that which is not God; they have moved me to anger by their vanities; and I also will provoke them by that which is not a people, by a foolish nation I will enrage them." (Deut. xxxii. 21.) Finally, the Prophet now threatens the same thing which was afterwards foretold by Christ when that blinding was at hand. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation which shall bring forth fruit." (Matt. xxi. 43.)

1. *To them that asked not.*[1] When he says that God manifested himself "to them that asked not," he shews that the Gentiles were anticipated by the grace of God, and that they brought no merit or excellence as an inducement to God to give it to them. This obviously agrees with that passage which we quoted, in which Moses calls them "a

[1] CALVIN, having found it "convenient to begin with the second verse," now returns to the exposition of the first verse.—*Ed.*

foolish nation." (Deut. xxxii. 21.) Thus, under a universal type, he describes what is the nature of men before the Lord anticipates them by his mercy; for they neither call on the Lord, nor seek him, nor think about him. And this passage ought to be carefully observed, in order to establish the certainty of our calling, which may be said to be the key that opens to us the kingdom of heaven; for by means of it peace and repose are given to our consciences, which would always be in doubt and uncertainty if they did not rest on such testimonies. We see, therefore, that it did not happen accidentally or suddenly that we were called by God and reckoned to be his people; for it had been predicted long before in many passages. From this passage Paul earnestly contends for the calling of the Gentiles, and says that Isaiah boldly exclaims and affirms that the Gentiles have been called by God, because he spoke more clearly and loudly than the circumstances of his own time required. Here we see, therefore, that we were called by an eternal purpose of God long before the event happened.

Behold I, behold I. By repeating these words twice, he confirms still more the declaration that God hath manifested himself in so friendly a manner to foreign and heathen nations, that they do not doubt that he dwells in the midst of them. And, indeed, that sudden change needed to be confirmed, because it was difficult to be believed; although by that very novelty the Prophet intended to magnify the unexpected grace of God. The meaning may be thus summed up: "When the Lord shall have offered himself to the Gentiles, and they shall have been joined to the holy family of Abraham, there will be some Church in the world, after the Jews have been driven out." Now we see that all that is here predicted by the Prophet was fulfilled by the Gospel, by which the Lord actually offered and manifested himself to foreign nations. Whenever, therefore, this voice of the Gospel is sounded in our ears, or when we record the word of the Lord, let us know that the Lord is present, and offers himself, that we may know him familiarly, and may call on him boldly and with assured confidence.

3. *A people that provoketh me.* Here he describes and

illustrates more largely in what respects the Jews were rebellious against God. It was because they had forsaken the command of God, and had polluted themselves by various superstitions. He had said a little before, (Is. lxiii. 17,) that the Jews had estranged themselves from God, because they wandered after their inventions; and now he points out the fruit of that licentiousness, that, by giving a loose rein to their thoughts, they overturned the pure worship of God. And undoubtedly this is the origin of all superstitions, that men are delighted with their own inventions, and choose to be wise in their own eyes rather than restrain their senses in obedience to God. In vain do men bring forward their devotions, as they call them, and their good intentions, which God holds in such abhorrence and detestation that they who have followed them are guilty of breaking the covenant and deserting from their allegiance; for there is nothing which we ought to undertake of our own accord, but we ought to obey God when he commands. In a word, the beginning and perfection of lawful worship is a readiness to obey.

By the word "provoke" he describes the impudence of the people, who deliberately, as it were, provoked God, and had no reverence for his majesty so as to submit to his authority. And he heightens the description by saying, *To my face;* for since God may be said to be present and actually beheld by those whom he warns by his word, they sin more heinously, and are guilty of greater impudence and rebellion, than those who never heard the word.

That sacrificeth in gardens, and offereth incense on bricks. He mentions the "gardens" which they had consecrated to their idols, and says that they provoked him by them. Some think that "bricks" are mentioned by way of contempt, and are indirectly contrasted with the altar on which alone God wished that they should sacrifice; and accordingly they think that here he mentions the roofs on which superstitious persons were wont to offer sacrifices; for they were made of "bricks." But I think that it means simply the altars which they had built for idols; for, although they were not without the plausible pretence of wishing to imitate that

form of altar which God had prescribed, yet God abhorred it, because it was contrary to his word.

4. *Who dwell in the graves.* He enumerates other kinds of superstitions; and although, in consequence of its brevity, the description is obscure, yet we may easily learn from other passages what was the nature of them. For as necromancy was generally practised among heathen nations, the Jews also consulted demons "in graves and deserts," instead of consulting God alone, which they ought to have done; and, as if they were seeking answers from the dead, they took pleasure in being deceived by the illusions of demons.[1] How solemnly the Lord had forbidden it, appears very clearly from Deut. xviii. 10, 11, and other passages; and we have seen something of this kind in a former part of this book, (Is. viii. 19.) In general we are taught that God demands nothing more than obedience, which he prefers to slain beasts and sacrifices. (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

Who eat swine's flesh. Formerly he complained that the worship of God was polluted by strange inventions; and now he adds that they set aside every distinction, so that they do not distinguish between the clean and the unclean; and he brings forward a single instance, that they do not abstain from "swine's flesh." But it may be thought that this was a small matter. Very far from it; for we ought not to judge from our own opinion, but from that of the legislator, how heinous a sin it is; and nothing which the Lord has forbidden ought to be reckoned trivial. (Lev. xi. 7; Deut. xiv. 8.) This related to the external profession of faith, by which the Jews were in duty bound to testify how widely they differed from the pollution of the Gentiles. From that rule, therefore, which the Lord enjoins upon us, we must not swerve even a hair's breadth.[2]

5. *Remain by thyself.*[3] He points out extreme im-

[1] "Des esprits malins." "Of wicked spirits."

[2] "Non pas mesmes de l'espesseur d'une ongle." "Not even the thickness of a nail."

[3] "The literal translation is 'Approach to thyself;' and as this implies removal from the speaker, the essential meaning is correctly expressed, though in a very different form from the original, both by the Septuagint (πόῤῥω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ) and by the Vulgate (Recede a me). The common English Version (Stand by thyself), and Henderson's improvement of

piety in the Jews, who obstinately and rebelliously opposed God's worshippers, and refused to listen to any warnings. There is some hope of repentance, so long as we lend an ear to warnings and reproofs; but if we reject them, our case is undoubtedly hopeless.

Though the words are apparently obscure, their meaning amounts to this, that hypocrites disdainfully and fiercely repel faithful advisers, because they either make false claims to holiness, or, on account of pride, do not suffer themselves to be reproved; for hypocrisy is never free from supercilious disdain and haughtiness. Let us not wonder, therefore, that those who are infected by this vice swell with insolent pretensions, and boast of their virtue and holiness, and value themselves more highly than all others; for Satan has blinded them to make an idle and ostentatious boast of what they call their devotions, and to despise the word of God.

Commentators think that this is a general statement; which reproves the Jews for refusing to submit to the prophets. But it appears to me that we ought to take into account a circumstance to which they do not attach sufficient weight, that this verse is in close and immediate connection with the preceding verses, and contains a sharp reproof of the Jews, for not only revolting from the true worship, but likewise following obstinately their own inventions, so as to turn with disdain from every one that did not flatter them; for that phrase, "Remain with thyself," means nothing else than "Away with thee!" as if they declared that they would have nothing to do with honest instructors.[1]

6. *Lo, it is written before me.* He alludes to the ordinary custom of judges, who keep before them in writing the processes of investigation regarding any matter, together with the testimonies, acts, and everything of that nature, in order that, when it shall be found necessary to make use of them,

it (Keep by thyself), both suggest an idea not contained in the original, namely, that of standing alone; whereas all that is expressed by the Hebrew phrase is the act of standing away from the speaker, for which Lowth has found the idiomatic equivalent (Keep to thyself.)"—*Alexander.*

[1] "Avec ceux qui leur remonstrent choses pour leur salut." "With those whose serious warnings are intended for their salvation."

the guilt of the culprit may be easily proved; for we write those things which we wish to be remembered by posterity The Lord therefore testifies that these things can never fade into oblivion, because they have been written; for, although for a time he pass them over in silence, yet the wicked shall not escape unpunished, but shall at length feel that he is a righteous judge.

Hence we ought to learn that we must not abuse God's patience, because he bears with us long, and does not all at once stretch out his hand to punish us; for all our faults are nevertheless written before him, for which we must at length suffer punishment, if we do not repent.[1] True, indeed, the Lord has no need of writing as an aid to memory; but he makes use of this form of expression, that we may not think that he has forgotten anything, when he is slow in executing his judgments. Jeremiah even says expressly, that "the sin of Judah is written with an iron pen and with the nail of a diamond." (Jer. xvii. 1.)

To *recompense into the bosom* is a phrase frequently employed in Scripture; for men think either that their sins are concealed, or that they will not be called to account for them; but, hurried along by unbridled lust, or laying the blame on some other person, they drive fear to a distance from them. (Ps. lxxix. 12; Jer. xxxii. 18.) On this account the Lord threatens that he will "recompense into their bosom," that they may consider who is the judge with whom they have to do.

7. *Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together.* Isaiah enlarges on that which he had expressed briefly in the preceding verse; for he shews that the Jews are not now, for the first time, guilty of this treason, but that there is the ancient example of the fathers, in whose footsteps they closely follow. In like manner the Lord formerly complained that he had borne long with that people, and was at length wearied with them. He therefore describes the aggravated heinousness of the offence, by saying that the Jews follow the example of their fathers; as if he had said, "They are very bad eggs of bad crows;" for the

[1] "Si nous ne changeons de vie." "If we do not change our life."

more frequently and the more earnestly that men have been warned, so much the more must they be condemned for obstinacy, if they do not repent. Thus he shews that they disregarded warnings and threatenings, and persevered for many years in their baseness and impiety; that they may no longer bring forward any excuse or pretence, but, on the contrary, may know that they deserve severe punishment.

Here we see that the corruption which has flowed from the fathers is so far from being an excuse to the children, (as is alleged by ignorant persons, who commonly make use of this shield,) that, on the contrary, they draw down on themselves severer judgment. He adds יחדו, (*yăchdāv,*) *together.* As if the Lord had said, that he gathers together, and, as it were, forms into a bundle, the crimes of the fathers and of the children, that he may at length punish them. Not that "the son bears the iniquity of the father," (Ezek. xviii. 20,) and endures the punishment which the father deserved, but that, since they carry on the crimes of their fathers, they must be included and condemned in the same judgment, while obstinacy shews that their diseases are incurable.

Because they have offered incense on the mountains. He glances at one kind of sin, under which, by a figure of speech in which a part is taken for the whole, he describes also the rest of their sins; for he means by it the whole of the revolt by which the people withdrew from the true worship, and devoted and gave themselves up to strange gods. This is the utmost verge of iniquities; for, when the fear of God has been taken away, we can have nothing sound or healthy in us. Thus he points out the source of all evils, which ought to be the more diligently observed, because men are highly pleased with themselves, and think that they deserve great praise, when they worship God according to their own fancy, and do not understand that nothing is more abominable in the sight of God than pretended worship, which proceeds from human contrivance. Beyond all doubt, the people desired to be acceptable to God by "offering incense on the mountains;" but it is not from the purpose of their mind, and from their intention, as they call it, that we must judge

of their work. In preference to all men, we must listen to the voice of the Lord, who testifies that he is greatly dishonoured, that we may not endeavour to defend ourselves by pleading our intention, which will render us doubly guilty before God.

Therefore I will measure back their ancient work. The word ראשנה (*rīshōnāh*) may be explained in various ways, either "I will measure back with their antiquity," or, "in the first place," or "formerly," or, "from the beginning." But we must take into account the connection of the passage, from which the Prophet's meaning will be clearly seen. Having spoken a little before about the works of the fathers, he undoubtedly ridicules those who made them a bulwark. It is a slight and useless defence, and indeed it is idle to plead before God the practices of the fathers, that is, their long-continued corruption; for in this way we bring down on ourselves a heavier judgment. And yet many men are so intoxicated by this pretence, that they think that no objection can be brought against it, and even refuse to listen to anything else.[1] Antiquity, indeed, is highly venerable; but no man ought to value it so highly as to make the smallest diminution of the honour of God. This is a remarkable passage for convincing those who uphold superstitions by length of years, as if old established error ought to be accounted a law.

8. *Thus saith Jehovah.* Here the Prophet softens the preceding statement; for otherwise it would have been very hard to say that the iniquities of the fathers would be brought to remembrance in such a manner, that the Lord would destroy the fathers and the children along with them; and these things might strike believers with such horror as to lead them to think that their salvation was past all hope. We must therefore be carefully on our guard, and observe the reason why the Lord is angry with us; for he wishes to terrify us, so as to lead us to himself, and not so as to throw us into despair. For this reason he holds out hope to believers, that they may not lose courage; and, by exhibiting

[1] "Et ne veulent ouir autre chanson." "And do not wish to hear any other song."

consolation, he encourages them to repentance. He confirms it by a comparison.

As if one found a grape in a cluster. As if a person who has determined to root out a vine that is inconvenient or injurious to him, and finds a fruit-bearing branch, shall spare it; so the Lord will refrain from tearing up those in which he shall find no strength or flavour. Formerly he complained that the people were useless, and even that they yielded bitter fruits. (Is. v. 2, 4, 7.) Isaiah retains the same comparison, but applies it in a different manner. "Though the people may be said to be an unfruitful and degenerate vine, yet there are still left some fruit-bearing branches which the Lord will not suffer to perish.

But this may be understood in two ways; either that the Lord will preserve his people for the sake of the elect, or that, when the reprobate are destroyed, he will rescue believers from destruction. There is a wide difference between these two interpretations. As to the first, we know that the wicked are sometimes spared on account of good men, whom God does not wish to destroy or to involve in the same judgment, as various examples of Scripture sufficiently shew. The Lord would have spared Sodom, if he had found but ten good men in it. (Gen. xviii. 32.) All who sailed along with Paul, to the number of "two hundred and seventy-six," (Acts xxvii. 37,) were "given to him" and rescued from shipwreck, that the power which He manifested in his servant might be more illustriously displayed. (Acts xxvii. 24.) The Lord blessed the house of Potiphar, and made it to prosper in all things, for the sake of Joseph who was in his family. (Gen. xxxix. 5.) There are other examples of the same kind, which every one will easily collect for himself.

But I approve more highly of the other interpretation, that the Lord will punish the sins of his people in such a manner as to have regard nevertheless to his own, and not to involve all universally in the same destruction. Nor does he mean only that believers shall be saved, but that a people shall be left amongst whom men shall call on his name. And the comparison ought to be carefully observed; for he shews

that the remnant will be small, as compared with the multitude which was at that time, as has been already explained. (Is. i. 9.)

Now, as to believers being often punished along with the reprobate, let us not think that it is wrong; for the Lord will often find in each of us enough of blame to afflict and punish us. Besides, he wishes to instruct and arouse us by his chastisements; and seeing that we have been joined to a certain people, and, as it were, ingrafted into their body, we undoubtedly ought not to think it strange if we, who may be said to be diseased members, shall share in the same strokes and pains. Yet the Lord moderates the punishment, so as not to tear up by the roots the elect plants.

9. *And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob.* He explains the preceding verse by other words, and shews that the Lord wishes to reserve for himself some "seed" that shall call upon him; for the Lord is wont to chastise his people in such a manner as to determine that the Church shall exist, in which his truth and the pure religion may be preserved, and which Paul for that very reason calls "the pillar and foundation of truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15.) We must not, therefore, judge of the Church from the present condition of things, (for nothing in this world can be permanent,) but from the purpose of God, which will not suffer it to be overturned or destroyed. This ought to be carefully remembered by us, that we may not be terrified by any calamities or ruins, or by any hideous desolation of the Church.

And out of Judah the heir of my mountains. He gives the appellation of "heirs of the mountains" to those who, having returned from captivity, shall again inhabit their native land. Judea, as is well known, was a mountainous country. He again explains what might have appeared to be somewhat obscure.

And my elect shall possess it by inheritance. He means that the Jews shall return to their original condition, that they may enjoy that country as their own inheritance, from which they had been driven out. Judea was soon afterwards reduced to the utmost desolation. The Lord testifies that this shall not be of long duration; and, in order to confirm it

the more, he mentions in a compendious manner the covenant by which that land was destined for them, that they might possess it by the right of inheritance. Thus, although they were long in captivity, yet this word "inheritance" ought to arouse them to cherish the confident hope that they would at length regain the possession of it. But it ought to be observed that this grace is confined to the elect and true worshippers of God, that every one may not apply it to himself without distinction.[1]

10. *And Sharon shall be an abode of flocks.* By these figures he means nothing else than that the land, which was a desert, shall be again inhabited; for there is an implied comparison. "Although, in consequence of the banishment of her inhabitants into a distant country, she shall be forsaken and desolate, yet she shall at length be inhabited, so as to abound in flocks and herds, and have lands that are fertile and that are fit for pasture, and supply abundantly everything that is necessary for the food and support of men." *Sharon* was a place adapted to pasture, and so was *Achor;* but the former was adapted to flocks, and the latter to herds.

Here we see that the promises of God contain blessings not only of the future but also of the present life, that we may taste more and more his bounty and kindness; for by the latter[2] we are invited to the greater and more excellent blessings of the heavenly life. When the Lord extends his bounty to flocks and herds, this ought to confirm us the more and make us more certain of his fatherly care and anxiety about us; for if he pays attention to flocks which were created for our sake, much more will he supply us with all that is necessary "for the life that now is, and for that

[1] "If it should please God to call the natural descendants of the patriarch in that land, and convert them in a body to the true faith, there would be an additional coincidence between the prophecy and the event, even in minor circumstances, such as we often find in the history of Christ. But if no such national restoration of the Jews to Palestine should ever happen, the extension of the true religion over that benighted region, which both prophecy and Providence encourage us to look for, would abundantly redeem the pledge which God has given to his people in this and other parts of Scripture."—*Alexander.*

[2] "Par les biens terriens." "By earthly blessings."

which is to come." (1 Tim. iv. 8.) Yet we must likewise keep in view the spiritual meaning (of which we have spoken formerly) that leads us from God's earthly blessing to Christ's spiritual kingdom, which the prophets shadow out under that image.

For my people. Here also he excludes the reprobate, who were not ashamed of glorying vainly and falsely of the name of God. Although they confidently boast of promises and sacraments, yet they have nothing in common with the children, and, having been shut out from all hope of God's favours, they receive the reward of their iniquity. By adding, *Who have sought me,* he describes more plainly who are they that shall be partakers of these benefits, in order that, as has been already said, he may entirely cut off reprobates and hypocrites. The sure mark by which lambs are distinguished from kids, and lawful children from bastards, is to "seek" the Lord; for it is not enough to shelter ourselves under a name and title, but we must seek the Lord with a pure conscience, that we may cleave to him with the whole heart. (Deut. vi. 5.)

11. *But ye forsakers of Jehovah, who forget the mountain of my holiness.* That hypocrites may not abuse these promises, or think that what is said about the restoration of the people relates to them, he again addresses them by these words, and calls them "forsakers,"[1] because they "have forgotten" Mount Zion; that is, have revolted from the true worship of God. By "the mountain of holiness" he denotes figuratively the rule of a holy life which had been laid down in the word of the Lord; for the temple had been built by the command of the Lord, that these men might call upon him; and likewise the altar on which the Lord wished that sacrifices should be offered. Thus those sacrifices and oblations were impure which were offered in other places, or to other gods, or in any way different from the strict observance of the ceremonies of the Law. It is not lawful for men to undertake anything at their own suggestion; for the Lord demands nothing but obedience, (1 Sam. xv. 22,) and there is no obedience without faith; and there is no faith without

[1] "Et les appelle apostats." "And calls them apostates."

the word, (Rom. x. 17,) by which alone we are at liberty to inquire or think concerning God.

Who prepare a table for the army.[1] He enumerates their superstitions. The word גד (*Gad*) is variously explained. Some think that it denotes Jupiter, or the star of Jupiter; and others that it denotes Fortune. Jerome translates the words, "Ye who spread a table for fortune;" for he thinks that it means prosperity. But I think it more probable that גד (*Gad*) means "a band," or "a troop," or even "an army;" and this agrees well with the etymology of the word and the context. One passage is especially worthy of notice, (Gen. xxx. 11,) in which Leah rejoices on account of the addition of children; for I think that the word which he employs, בגד (*bĕgăd*), ought to be understood as if she had said, "Now, I have plenty of children;" for she had many children before that time, and hence she gave the name גד (*Găd*) to her fifth son. Accordingly, I think that גד (*Găd*) ought to be interpreted, in this passage, as meaning "a troop," or "an army;" because their false gods were so numerous, that they could scarcely be numbered for multitude.

And fill an oblation to the number. To *fill* may here be taken in two senses; either that they supplied everything largely and bountifully for the worship of idols; (for superstition has no limit or measure, and they who are niggardly in the worship of God very cheerfully spend all that they have for the sake of idols;) or that they passed by no idol to which they did not render their worship. I prefer the latter meaning; for idolaters do not think that they have done enough, if they do not give honour to each of the saints; and the more numerous the saints whom they have hon-

[1] "That prepare a table for that troop, (or, Gad.)"—Eng. Ver. "A table. A lectisternium the Romans called it. Gad and Meni were heathen deities, or perhaps two appellations of the same idol, according to the scriptural manner of expressing the same thing, in the same sentence, by its different names; so in Jer. xxxii. 35, Baal and Moloch mean one false god. Gad, in Arabic, is Goodness. Meni denoted the Moon, from מנה (*mānāh*), to number; whence μὴν, a month, and μήνη, the ancient Greek name for the moon."—*Stock*, who quotes Rosenmüller as his authority.

oured, they think that they will have better success. We have too great experience of this every day in the Papists.

By "number" he means the same thing as he formerly meant by "army;" for it is a repetition which is very customary among Hebrew writers. He means, therefore, that "a table is prepared," that is, sacrifice is offered, not to a single idol, but to a great number of idols; in order to shew clearly how grievous are the punishments which they have deserved.

12. *Therefore I will number you to the sword.* He alludes to the number of the gods; and the Lord declares that he will easily ascertain how numerous they are, for he "will number them to the sword." And hence we see that the Prophet, in the preceding verse, does not speak of the two planets, Jupiter and Mercury, as some think, but means that they were not satisfied with one God, and collected for themselves various idols. It is an idle conjecture that the word מני (*mĕnī*) denotes Mercury, because מנה (*mānāh*) signifies "to number," and Mercury presided over numbers and merchants.[1] The design of the Prophet is manifest, who declares that the people "shall be numbered to the sword," because they delighted in a vast number of gods, and did not choose to rely on one God.

Because I called, and ye did not answer. He heightens the extent and heinousness of that treason, by saying that the Jews sinned through deliberate malice, and on purpose, rather than through ignorance. They had been often instructed and warned, but had disdainfully rejected all warnings, and consequently were far less excusable than others, to whom no prophets were sent; for although ignorance cannot be pleaded as an excuse by any man, yet much less can it be pleaded by the Jews and those to whom the word of God is proclaimed, and who, on that account, will be condemned and punished more severely than others.

I spake, and ye did not hear. He describes the manner of calling, namely, that he exhorted the people by the pro-

[1] "Et que Mercure estoit le dieu des marchans qui ont leurs livres de contes." "And because Mercury was the god of merchants, who have their account-books."

phets; for by the word "speak" he twice repeats the same thing, as we have already stated to be the custom of Hebrew writers. To "hear" the Lord is to obey his word; for it would be a trivial matter to lend our ears, if we did not submit to the word; and it would then be with us as the proverb says, "They listen with the ears of an ass."[1] God wishes to be heard sincerely, and does not approve of a pretended hearing; and he shews how it came that they rejected the calling. It was because they shut their ears to the doctrine of the prophets; for the beginning of obedience is to bring a desire to learn.

And ye did evil before mine eyes. The phrase, "before mine eyes," is of the same import as "to my face;" a mode of expression which he made use of a little before. (Ver. 3.) All men, indeed, sin "before the eyes" of the Lord, and none can withdraw from his presence. But in a peculiar sense we are said to sin "before his eyes," when, having been called by him, we do not dread his presence; for he approaches nearer to those whom he calls by the prophets, and, so to speak, exhibits himself as present to them. Far more detestable, therefore, and worthy of severe chastisements, is the impiety of those who, laying aside all shame, despise and scorn God when he draws near to call and invite them.

And chose the things in which I took no pleasure. From this concluding clause of the verse it is evident that they are condemned, not for gross crimes, but for foolish devotions, by which they corrupted the worship of God. Although they zealously devoted themselves to sacrifices contrived by themselves, because they thought that in this way they would become entitled to the favour of God; yet he declares that he abhors their wicked practices. It is not permitted that any person shall have a free choice to follow whatever he thinks fit, but all must observe what God approves, and must not turn aside from it in any way whatever. Now we

[1] "Comme aux asnes qui font signe d'oreilles." "As with asses that make a show of ears." Greek proverbs of the same kind are still more abundant. Ὄνῳ τις ἔλεγε μῦθον· ὁ δὲ τὰ ὦτα ἔκινει. "One told a story to an ass, and he pricked up his ears." Ὄνος λύρας ἀκούων κίνει τὰ ὦτα. "An ass, listening to a lyre, pricks up his ears."—*Ed.*

see that it was not a fault peculiar to a single age that men should follow their own caprice in the worship of God, and should adore their own inventions instead of God; but whatever "pleasure" men "take in these things," the Lord solemnly declares that he condemns and abhors them.

13 and 14. *Behold, my servants shall eat.* Here also the Prophet more clearly distinguishes between hypocrites, who held a place in the Church, and the true and lawful children; for, although all without distinction were called children, yet he shews that many shall be disowned as not belonging to the family, and that they who proudly and haughtily exalted themselves, under the name of the people of God, shall be disappointed of their hope, which is vain and false. We must carefully observe the highly emphatic contrast between "the servants of God," and those who falsely pretend to his name; for he shews that empty titles, and false boasting, or vain confidence, shall avail them nothing.

Shall eat, shall drink. By these words he denotes happiness and a prosperous condition of life; as if he had said, that he will take care that believers shall not be in want of anything. But the Lord promises to his servants something different from what he actually bestows; for they often "are hungry and thirsty," (1 Cor. iv. 11,) while the wicked abound in enjoyments of every kind, and abuse them for luxury and intemperance. But it ought to be observed, that the kingdom of Christ is here described under figures; for otherwise we could not understand it. Accordingly, the Prophet draws comparisons from earthly kingdoms, in which, when the people abound in wealth and enjoy comforts of every kind, there is a visible display of the blessing of God from which we may judge of his fatherly love.

But since it is not proper that good men should have their minds engrossed by earthly advantages, it is enough that some taste of those advantages should support their faith. And if they are sometimes oppressed by hunger, yet, being satisfied with a moderate portion of good, they nevertheless acknowledge that God is their Father, and that he is kind to them, and in their poverty have greater riches than kings and nobles. On the other hand, the wicked, whatever may

be their abundance of good things, cannot enjoy them with a good conscience, and therefore are the most wretched of all men. The Prophet, therefore, has in his eye the right use of the gifts of God; for they who serve God in a right manner receive, as children from the hand of a father, all that is necessary for this life, while others, like thieves and profane persons, take violent possession of it. Wicked men are never satisfied with any amount of wealth, however great; they have continual fear and trembling, and their conscience can never be at ease.

The Lord, therefore, does not promise here what he does not actually bestow; and this happiness must not be estimated by the outward condition of things. This is still more evident from what follows, where he speaks of *joy* and *thanksgiving*. The Prophet undoubtedly intends to state in a few words, that contentment does not lie in abundance of earthly enjoyments, but in calm peace of mind and spiritual joy; for unbelievers have no relish for such things, but to believers a persuasion of God's fatherly love is more delightful than all earthly enjoyments. Yet let us observe that we ought to look for all prosperity from God alone, who will not permit his people to be in want of anything that belongs to a happy life.

15. *And ye shall leave your name for a curse*[1] *to my elect.* He continues the same doctrine, and teaches that God will at length separate hypocrites from the true servants. And indeed we need not wonder that the Prophet dwells so much on this point; for there is nothing of which it is harder to convince hypocrites, who, puffed up with pride, deceive and blind themselves. He affirms that "their name" shall

[1] "Oath is here put for curse, as it is added to it in Dan. ix. 11, and the two are combined in Num. v. 21, where the oath of cursing may be regarded as the complete expression, of which oath is here an ellipsis. To leave one's name for a curse, according to Old Testament usage, is something more than to leave it to be cursed. The sense is, that the name shall be used as a formula of cursing, so that men shall be able to wish nothing worse to others, than a like character and fate. This is clear from Jer. xxix. 22, compared with Zech. iii. 2, as well as from the converse or correlative promise to the patriarchs and their children, that a like use should be made of their names as a formula of blessing. (Gen. xxii. 18; xlviii. 20.)"—*Alexander*.

be "accursed," because they thought that they were the holy seed, and that nothing else under heaven was worthy of being remembered. Such is also the import of the word "Leave;" as if he had said that false boasting, to which they were so strongly attached, shall be shaken off by violence; and therefore, that they may not flatter themselves with a glory that is temporal, and that shall speedily pass away, the Lord rebukes that haughtiness, and declares that he will have other servants, to whom they shall be a curse, so that even in solemn cursing this shall be taken as an example, "May God curse thee as he has cursed the Jews!"

And shall call his servants by another name. He shews how ill-founded is the confidence of that nation, which thought that God would have no people, if he had not the posterity of Abraham; for he solemnly declares that he will adopt a new people, and that he is not confined to the Jews, so as not easily to find others whom he shall adorn with the "name" of his people. The opinion entertained by some, that by "another name" is meant the Christian name, is exceedingly unnatural; and even from the context it is evident that the Prophet had quite a different object in view; for, in consequence of the Jews boasting proudly of the antiquity of their name, and growing insolent at having been elected by God long ago, as if God could not do without them, he shews that he will elect and adopt another people, and yet that he cannot be accused of capriciousness or fickleness, as if he had changed his mind. He will execute his purpose and his righteous judgments against those who, under a false pretence of his name, obscure his glory and corrupt all godliness.

16. *He who blesseth himself in the earth.* Here the whole world is contrasted with a corner of Judea, in which the worship of God might be said to be shut up. Since the time when God has been manifested everywhere, he is not now worshipped in one particular district, but in all places without distinction; as Christ also teacheth, (John iv. 21,) "The hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father;" and Paul also

saith, "I wish that men in every place may lift up clean hands, without wrath and disputing." (1 Tim. ii. 8.) Thus the word "earth," by which he denotes, in this passage, the whole world, is employed by him in an indirect contrast with Judea.

Shall bless himself in the true God. Shall swear by the true God. By "blessing" and "swearing" he denotes the whole of the worship of God. "Swearing," as we have formerly seen,[1] is a kind of worship of God; for by it we declare that all judgment belongs to God, and acknowledge that he is perfectly acquainted with all that we do. We "bless," when we wish to obtain from him all prosperity, and render thanksgiving to him alone; and, in short, when we acknowledge that our prosperity comes from no other source than from his undeserved kindness. By "the true God" is meant that he is faithful to his promises and steadfast to his purpose; though perhaps there is an implied and indirect contrast between "the true God" and the false gods of the Gentiles.

For the former afflictions are surrendered to forgetfulness. This promise relates to believers only. God declares that he will put an end to their afflictions and distresses, that the calamity of the Church may not be perpetual. This began to be accomplished when the people were brought out of Babylon; for, although they were afflicted in various ways both during the journey and at home, yet the severity of the punishments was mitigated; because the return to their native country, the rebuilding of the temple, the restoration of regular government, soothed their griefs, and supported their hearts by good hope till the coming of Christ.

17. *For, lo, I will create new heavens and a new earth.* By these metaphors he promises a remarkable change of affairs; as if God had said that he has both the inclination and the power not only to restore his Church, but to restore it in such a manner that it shall appear to gain new life and to dwell in a new world. These are exaggerated modes of expression; but the greatness of such a blessing, which was

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, Vol. ii. p. 70; Vol. iii. p. 467.

to be manifested at the coming of Christ, could not be described in any other way. Nor does he mean only the first coming, but the whole reign, which must be extended as far as to the last coming, as we have already said in expounding other passages.

Thus the world is (so to speak) renewed by Christ; and hence also the Apostle (Heb. ii. 5) calls it "a new age," and undoubtedly alludes to this statement of the Prophet. Yet the Prophet speaks of the restoration of the Church after the return from Babylon. This is undoubtedly true; but that restoration is imperfect, if it be not extended as far as to Christ; and even now we are in the progress and accomplishment of it, and those things will not be fulfilled till the last resurrection, which has been prescribed to be our limit.

The former things shall not be remembered. Some refer these words to heaven and earth; as if he had said that henceforth they shall have no celebrity and no name. But I choose rather to refer them to the former times; for he means that the joy at being restored shall be so great that they shall no longer remember their miseries. Or perhaps it will be thought preferable to view them as relating to benefits which, though they were worthy of being recorded, lost their name when God's amazing grace shone forth. In this sense the Prophet said elsewhere, "Remember ye not the former things." (Isa. xliii. 18.) Not that God wished the first deliverance to be set aside or blotted out of the hearts of believers; but because by comparison the one brought a kind of forgetfulness over the other, just as the sun, when he rises, deprives the stars of their brightness.

Let us remember that these things take place in us so far as we are renewed. But we are only in part renewed, and therefore we do not yet see a new heaven and a new earth. We need not wonder, therefore, that we continue to mourn and weep, since we have not entirely laid aside the old man, but many remains are still left. It is with us also that the renovation ought to begin; because we hold the first rank, and it is through our sin that "the creatures groan, and are subject to vanity," as Paul shews. (Rom. viii. 20.) But

when we shall be perfectly renewed, heaven and earth shall also be fully renewed, and shall regain their former state. And hence it ought to be inferred, as we have frequently remarked, that the Prophet has in his eye the whole reign of Christ, down to its final close, which is also called "the day of renovation and restoration." (Acts iii. 21.)

18. *But rejoice ye and be glad for ever.* He exhorts believers to rejoice, in such a manner as they ought, on account of such a benefit bestowed by God. And this was added for the sake of amplification; because men do not adequately consider God's other benefits, and especially that which is the highest and most excellent of all; for either they disregard them altogether, or value them less than they ought to do. On this account believers must be aroused and urged by such exhortations as these, that they may not shew themselves to be unthankful or unmindful, or think that it ought to be lightly passed by, that, having been redeemed by the hand of Christ, they carry in their hearts the pledge of eternal and heavenly life. That is the reason why Isaiah shews that believers do not give due praise for redemption in any other way than by continuing their joy through the whole course of their life, and employing themselves in celebrating the praises of God.

For, lo, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. At first sight this might be thought harsh; but an excellent meaning is obtained, that the ground of joy in the deliverance of the Church shall be so great as to remove every cloud of sadness. And, indeed, since even afflictions aid our salvation, (Rom. viii. 28,) we have good reason for rejoicing in them.

19. *And I will be glad in Jerusalem.* He expresses more than in the preceding verse; for by these words he means that he not only will give to men ground for rejoicing, but even will be a partaker with them in that joy. So great is his love toward us, that he delights in our prosperity not less than if he enjoyed it along with us. And hence we obtain no small confirmation of our faith, when we learn that God is moved, and so powerfully moved, by such an affection toward us. If we are in painful and distressed circum-

stances, he says that he is affected by grief and sorrow; and, on the other hand, if our condition is pleasant and comfortable, he says that he takes great pleasure in our prosperity. Hence also we have formerly seen that "the Spirit of the Lord is sad and vexed," (Isa. lxiii. 10,) when that order which he demands and approves is overturned and confounded; and in another passage he takes upon himself the character of a husband who is satisfied with the love of his wife. (Isa. lxii. 5.)

20. *There shall be no more thence an infant of days.* Some think that this points out the difference between the Law and the Gospel; because "the Law, as a schoolmaster," (Gal. iii. 24,) kept scholars in the first elements, but the Gospel leads us on to mature age. Others suppose it to mean that there will no longer be any distinction of age; because, where life is eternal, no line is drawn between the child and the old man. But I interpret the words of the Prophet in this manner, "Whether they are children or old men, they shall arrive at mature age so as to be always vigorous, like persons in the prime of life; and, in short, they shall always be healthful and robust;" for it is on account of our sins that we grow old and lose our strength. "All our days," saith Moses, "pass away when thou art angry: we close our years quicker than a word. The days of our years in which we live are seventy years, or, at the utmost, eighty: what goeth beyond this in the strongest is toil and vexation; our strength passeth swiftly, and we fly away." (Ps. xc. 9, 10.) But Christ comes to repair our strength, and to restore and preserve our original condition.

For the son of a hundred years shall die young. It is proper to distinguish between the two clauses; for, after having said that the citizens of the Church shall be long-lived, so that no one shall be taken out of the world till he has reached mature age and fully completed his course, he likewise adds that, even in old age, they shall be robust. Although the greater part of believers hardly support themselves through weakness, and the strength of others decays even before the time, yet that promise is not made void; for, if Christ reigned truly and perfectly in us, his strength

would undoubtedly flourish in us, and would invigorate both body and soul. To our sins, therefore, it ought to be imputed, that we are liable to diseases, pains, old age, and other inconveniences; for we do not permit Christ to possess us fully, and have not advanced so far in newness of life as to lay aside all that is old.[1]

Here it ought also to be observed, that blessings either of soul or body are found only in the kingdom of Christ, that is, in the Church, apart from which there is nothing but cursing. Hence it follows that all who have no share in that kingdom are wretched and unhappy; and, however fresh and vigorous they may appear to be, they are, nevertheless, in the sight of God, rotten and stinking corpses.

21 and 22. *They shall build houses and inhabit them.* In these verses he mentions what is written in the Law; for these are the blessings of the Law, that they who have obeyed God shall dwell in the houses which they have built, and shall gather fruit from the trees which they have planted. (Lev. xxvi. 10.) On the other hand, the disobedient shall be expelled from the houses which they built, and shall give place to foreigners, and shall be deprived of the fruits of the trees which they planted. "The Lord," saith Isaiah, "shall protect you from that curse, so as to enjoy your property." Now the Prophets hold out those things which relate to the present life, and borrow metaphors from them; but it is in order that they may teach us to rise higher and to embrace eternal and blessed life. We must not fix our whole attention on these transitory blessings, but must make use of them as ladders, that, being raised to heaven, we may enjoy eternal and immortal blessings. To the Church, which has been renewed, and which rests on nothing but God's good pleasure and undeserved favour, is justly promised the enjoyment of those blessings of which unbelievers had deprived themselves.

According to the days of a tree. Some think that this is a promise of eternal life; as if men had the tree of life; but that is forced ingenuity, and far removed from the Prophet's meaning. And I do wonder that commentators give them-

[1] "Tout le vieil homme." "All the old man."

selves so much trouble in explaining this passage; for the Prophet speaks, not only of life, but of a peaceful condition of life; as if he had said, "Ye shall plant vineyards, and shall eat the fruit of them; and ye shall not be removed from this life before receiving the fruit, which shall be enjoyed, not only by yourselves, but by your children and posterity. He employs the metaphor of a tree, because he had formerly spoken of planting vineyards; and accordingly he promises that the people shall peacefully enjoy both their houses and their vineyards, and shall not be molested by enemies or robbers, and this peaceful condition shall last as long as the life of a tree.

And my elect shall perpetually enjoy[1] *the work of their hands.* A work is said to be continued or perpetuated when the result of it is prosperous; for otherwise men would subject themselves to long and severe toil, and all to no purpose, if God did not grant success. Enemies will either take away or destroy what we have begun, and the completion of it will be out of our power; and therefore it is strictly said to be continued, not when merely some progress is made, but when it is brought to a close. Here it ought to be observed, that we cannot possess our wealth and have the peaceful and lawful enjoyment of it in any other way than by dwelling in the kingdom of Christ, who is the only heir of the world, and without being ingrafted into his body. Wicked men may indeed enjoy, for many years, the good things of this life; but they will continually be uneasy, and will wretchedly devour themselves, so that even possession shall be destructive and deadly; for it is only by faith that we obtain all that belongs to a blessed life, and they who have not faith cannot be members of Christ.

23. *They shall not toil in vain.* He enumerates other kinds of blessings which God promises to the kingdom of Christ; for, although God always blessed his people, yet the blessings were in some measure suspended till the coming of Christ, in whom was displayed full and complete happiness. In a word, both Jews and Gentiles shall be happy, in all

[1] "Ou, jouiront en vieil aage de l'œuvre de leurs mains." "Or, shall enjoy in old age the work of their hands."

respects, under the reign of Christ. Now, as it is a token of God's wrath and curse when we obtain no advantage from our labour, so, on the other hand, it is a token of blessing when we clearly see the fruit of our labour. For this reason he says that they who shall have returned from captivity, in order that they may obtain a true and complete deliverance, shall not spend their labour in vain or lose their pains. The Law threatens the death of relatives, destructive wars, losses of property, and terror in their hearts. (Lev. xxvi. 22; Deut. xxviii. 48.) Here, on the contrary, are promised fertility, peace, the fruit of labour, and repose. And blessings of this kind ought to be carefully observed; for there are few who, amidst their labours, think of the blessing of God, so as to ascribe everything to him alone, and to be fully convinced that they will accomplish nothing whatever unless the Lord grant to them a prosperous result. Wherefore, as every blessing should be sought from God, so, when it has been received, thanksgiving should be rendered for it to God alone.

And they shall not bring forth in terror. When it is said that women "shall not bring forth in terror," some explain it to mean, that they shall have no uneasiness or dread of childbirth, because they shall be free from pain. We know that this punishment was inflicted on the woman on account of sin, to bring forth with difficulty, and to be in danger of death. Children are brought into the world with fear and trembling, when there is any expectation of war; and it is probable that the Prophet rather looks to this, that there shall be such settled peace that neither women nor men shall have any reason to fear; for this must be viewed as relating to both parents, who will have no dread about their children, as commonly happens when any danger is threatened.

For they shall be the seed of the blessed of Jehovah. This reason is highly appropriate; for whence come fears and terrors, whence come alarms, but from the curse of God? When the curse has been removed, the Prophet therefore says justly that parents, together with their offspring, shall be free from dread and anxious solicitude; because they shall be convinced that they shall always be safe and sound through the favour of God.

And their offspring with them. This is contrasted with childlessness, which is reckoned in the number of the curses of God; and therefore it is the same as if he had said, "I will no longer deprive them of their children, but will cause them to enjoy them, along with the rest of the blessings which I shall bestow upon them."

24. *Before they cry, I will listen.* A remarkable promise; for nothing is more desirable than to have God reconciled to us, and to have it in our power to draw near to him with freedom and boldness; for, although we are surrounded by innumerable distresses and calamities, yet we cannot be miserable so long as we are at liberty to betake ourselves to the Lord. Here therefore the Lord promises that we shall not pray in vain. Yet this was also promised to the fathers under the Law. It is certain that, since the beginning of the world, God listened to the fathers, to all that called upon him; for this is the most valuable fruit of faith. But he confirms this more and more. Because the Jews would be exiles for a long time, the Lord solemnly declares that he will not permit them any longer to languish in banishment, and will no longer delay his assistance, but will "listen to them even before they cry."

This relates chiefly to the kingdom of Christ, through whom we are heard and have access to God the Father, as Paul admirably explains. (Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12.) The fathers indeed enjoyed the same access, and there was no other way in which they could be heard but through Christ; but the door was still narrow and might be said to be shut, whereas now it has been most widely and perfectly thrown open. Under the law the people were wont to stand at a distance in the porch; but now nothing hinders us from entering into the sanctuary itself, because "the veil of the temple hath been rent." (Matt. xxvii. 51.) Thus we have admission into heaven through Christ, "that we may approach with freedom and boldness to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find needful assistance." (Heb. iv. 16.)

A question will be put. "Are there no believers in the world, and is there no kingdom of Christ, in the present day? For it does not appear that God is so ready to render

assistance, and there is no visible fruit of our prayers." I reply. Though it becomes fully evident that we have been heard when the event actually proves it, yet God does not in the meantime overlook us; for he does not permit us to faint, but supports us by the power of his Spirit, that we may wait for him patiently. Nor does he delay, as men do, because he has need of time, but because he wishes to exercise and try our patience. In a word, there are two ways in which God listens to us; first, when he renders assistance openly; and secondly, when he aids us by the power of his Spirit, that we may not sink under the weight of afflictions. And if this doctrine were deeply fixed in the hearts of men, they would fly to God more readily and boldly, and would not dispute so eagerly about calling on saints. For how comes it that men contrive for themselves such a variety of intercessors, to whom they betake themselves rather than to Christ, but because they do not receive that doctrine, and because they reject such large and bountiful promises?

25. *The wolf and the lamb shall feed together.* He means that everything shall be fully restored, when Christ shall reign. And here it appears as if there were an implied comparison between Adam and Christ. We know that all the afflictions of the present life flowed from the sin of the first man; for at that time we were deprived of the dominion and sovereignty which God had given to man (Gen. i. 28) over animals of every kind, all of which at first undoubtedly bowed cheerfully to the dominion of man, and were obedient to his will; but now the most of them rise up against man, and even carry on mutual war against each other. Thus, when wolves, bears, lions, and other savage animals of that kind, are hurtful to man and to other beasts from which we obtain some advantage, and when even animals which ought to have been useful to man are hostile to him, this ought to be imputed to his sin, because his disobedience overthrew the order of things. But since it is the office of Christ to bring back everything to its condition and order, that is the reason why he declares that the confusion or ruin that now exists in human affairs shall be removed by the coming of Christ; because at that time, corrup-

tions having been taken away, the world shall return to its first origin.

And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. "The lion" shall eat harmlessly, and shall no longer seek his prey. *The serpent,* satisfied with *his dust,* shall wrap himself in it, and shall no longer hurt by his envenomed bite. In a word, all that is disordered or confused shall be restored to its proper order. Yet beyond all controversy the Prophet speaks allegorically of bloody and violent men, whose cruel and savage nature shall be subdued, when they submit to the yoke of Christ. But first we must carefully consider that confusion which befell all the creatures in consequence of the fall of man; for if this were not taken into view, it would be impossible for us to have sufficiently just and correct views of this blessing of restoration. At the same time, we must keep in remembrance what we said in expounding a similar allegory in the eleventh chapter.[1] Here we are taught what is the nature of men before the Lord convert them and receive them into his fold; for they are cruel and untamed beasts, and only begin to abstain from doing any injury, when the Lord subdues their wicked inclination and their furious desire to do harm.

In all my holy mountain. This is added because, when rubbish and filth have been taken out of the way, the Lord will gather to himself a Church without spot. By the word *all* he means cleansing. Yet we ought not to think it strange that still so many are ferocious; for there are few that are the true inhabitants of God's mountain, few that are upright and faithful, even among those who profess to be Christians. Seeing that the old man still reigns and is vigorous in them, contentions and wars must also exist and prevail amongst them.

CHAPTER LXVI.

1. Thus saith the Lord, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house

1. Sic dicit Iehova, Cœlum sedes mea, et terra scabellum pedum meorum. Ubi ista domus quam

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, vol. i. p. 383.

that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?

2. For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the Lord: but to this *man* will I look, *even* to *him that is* poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

3. He that killeth an ox, *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood; he that burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol: yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not.

5. Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

6. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies.

7. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child.

8. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb?* saith thy God.

10. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her;

ædificabitis mihi? et ubi hic locus quietis meæ?

2. Atqui manus mea hæc omnia fecit, et cœperunt esse hæc omnia, dicit Iehova. Et ad hunc respicio qui humilis est ac contritus spiritu, tremitque ad sermonem meum.

3. Qui mactat bovem, acsi hominem occidat; qui sacrificat pecudem, acsi canem jugulet. Qui offert Minha, acsi offeret sanguinem suillum; qui recordatur thuris, acsi benedicat idolo (*Heb. iniquitati*). Et sanè elegerunt vias suas, et abominationes eorum anima ipsorum desideravit.

4. Ego quoque eligam illusiones eorum, et terrorem ipsorum inducam illis; quia vocavi, et nemo respondit; loquutus sum, et non audierunt; et fecerunt malum in oculis meis, et ea in quibus non oblector elegerunt.

5. Audite verbum Iehovæ, qui tremitis ad verbum ejus. Dixerunt fratres vestri odio vos habentes, rejicientes vos propter nomen meum. Glorificetur (*vel, gravis est; vel, onerosus; vel, glorificabitur*) Iehova. Atqui videbitur cum lætitia vestra; illi autem pudefient.

6. Vox tumultus ex urbe, vox e templo; vox Iehovæ reddentis mercedem hostibus suis.

7. Antequam parturiret, peperit; antequam veniret illi dolor, enixa est masculum.

8. Quis audivit huic simile? Quis simile huic vidit? An parietur terra die uno? An nascetur gens vice una? Quoniam simul doluit ad partum, simul peperit Sion filios suos.

9. An ego fœtus emitto, et non pariam? dicit Iehova. An ego parere facio, et cohibebor? dicit Deus tuus.

10. Lætamini cum Ierusalem, et exultate in ea, omnes qui diligitis eam; gaudete cum ea gaudio, omnes qui lugetis super eam.

11. That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

12. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees.

13. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14. And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and *his* indignation toward his enemies.

15. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

16. For by fire, and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many.

17. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one *tree* in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.

18. For I *know* their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

19. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to* Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, *to* Tubal and Javan, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

20. And they shall bring all your brethren *for* an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses,

11. Ut sugatis et saturemini ab ubere consolationum ejus, ut mulgeatis et delectemini splendore gloriæ ejus.

12. Quoniam sic dicit Iehova, Ecce ego derivo super eam, quasi fluvium, pacem; et quasi torrentem inundantem gloriam Gentium. Sugetis itaque, super latus portabimini, et super genua delectabimini.

13. Sicuti virum quem consolatur mater sua, ita ego consolabor vos, et super Ierusalem erit vobis consolatio.

14. Et videbitis, et lætabitur cor vestrum, et ossa vestra quasi herba florebunt; et cognoscetur manus Iehovæ erga servos suos, et indignabitur hostibus suis.

15. Quoniam ecce Iehova in igne veniet, et quasi turbo quadrigæ ejus, ut reddat in furore iram suam, et increpationem suam in flamma ignis.

16. Quoniam in igne Iehova judicabit, et in gladio suo omnem carnem; et multi erunt interfecti Iehovæ.

17. Qui sanctificant se, et qui se purificant in hortis post unam in medio; qui comedunt carnem suillam, et abominationem et murem, simul tollentur, dicit Iehova.

18. Nam ego opera eorum et cogitationes eorum. Quia venit tempus ut congregem omnes gentes et linguas; et venient, et videbunt gloriam meam.

19. Et ponam in illis signum, et mittam quosdam ex illis servatos ad gentes Tharsis, Pul, et Lud, qui trahunt arcu, Thubal et Javan, insulas remotas; quæ non audierunt nomen meum, et non viderunt gloriam meam; et annuntiabunt gloriam meam in Gentibus.

20. Et adducent omnes fratres vestros ex omnibus gentibus oblationem Iehovæ in equis et quadrigis,

and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord.

21. And I will also take of them for priests, *and* for Levites, saith the Lord.

22. For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

23. And it shall come to pass, *that* from one new-moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.

24. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

in vehiculis, et mulis, et celeribus animalibus, ad montem sanctum meum Ierusalem, dicit Iehova; quemadmodum adferunt filii Israel in vase mundo in domum Iehovæ.

21. Adeoque assumam ex illis aliquos in sacerdotes et Levitas, dicit Iehova.

22. Nam sicut cœli novi, et terra nova, quæ ego facio, stant coram me, dicit Iehova; ita stabunt semen vestrum et nomen vestrum.

23. Et accidet, ut e mense in mensem ejus, et ex Sabbatho in Sabbathum ejus, veniat omnis caro, ut adoret coram me, dicit Jehova.

24. Et egredientur, et videbunt cadavera hominum qui prævaricati sunt in me; quia vermis eorum non morietur, et ignis eorum non extinguetur, et erunt nausea omni carni.

1. *Thus saith Jehovah.* This discourse is different from the preceding one; for here the Prophet exclaims against the Jews, who, puffed up with vain confidence in the sacrifices and the temple, indulged freely in their pleasures, and flattered themselves in their sins under this pretence. He shews that this confidence is not only foolish and groundless, but diabolical and accursed; for they grossly mock God who endeavour to serve and appease him by outward ceremonies. Accordingly, he reproaches them with endeavouring to frame an idol in place of God, when they shut him up in the temple. Next, he speaks of the renovation of the Church, and of the extension of it throughout the whole world.

Heaven is my throne. His aim being to shake off the self-complacency of the pretended or hypocritical worshippers of God, he begins with his nature. By assigning "heaven" for his habitation, he means that the majesty of God fills all things, and is everywhere diffused; and that he is so far from being shut up in the temple, that he is not shut up or confined within any place whatever. The Scripture often teaches that God is in heaven; not that he is shut up in it, but in

order that we may raise our minds above the world, and may not entertain any low, or carnal, or earthly conceptions of him ; for the mere sight of heaven ought to carry us higher, and transport us into admiration. And yet, in innumerable passages, he protests that he is with us, that his power is everywhere diffused, in order that we may not imagine that he is shut up in heaven.

It may be thought that this is beyond all controversy, and was at that time acknowledged by all ; for who did not know that heaven and earth are filled by the majesty of God ? They might therefore object that there is no man who wishes to thrust God out of heaven, and that the Prophet has no good reason for waxing wroth and breaking out into such violent invective. And undoubtedly they rejected with great haughtiness this doctrine of the Prophet, and were highly irritated and enraged, as if great injury had been done to them. But it is easy to reply that, when men endeavour to appease God according to their own fancy, they frame an idol that is altogether contrary to his majesty. Relying on their useless ceremonies, they thought that they had performed their duty well when they went frequently to the temple, and offered in it prayers and sacrifices. The Prophet shews that the majesty of God must not be measured by this standard, and that all that they bring forward, unaccompanied by purity of heart, are absolute trifles ; for since it is evident from his dwelling-place being in heaven that the nature of God is spiritual, if the worship do not correspond to that nature, it is undoubtedly wicked and corrupted.

Where is that house which ye will build for me ? Under the word house or temple he includes all the ceremonies in which they thought that the worship of God consisted ; and because they measured God and his worship by the temple as a standard, the Prophet shews that it is unworthy of God's majesty to view his presence as confined to a visible and frail building. He does not argue merely about God's essence, but at the same time discourses concerning his true worship, which he shews to be spiritual, in order that it may correspond to the nature of God, who "is a Spirit." (John iv. 24.) And if men diligently considered what is the nature

of God, they would not contrive foreign and new modes of worship for him, or measure him by themselves.[1] This common and often expressed sentiment is more weighty and energetic than if the Prophet had brought forward something new; for he shews that they are so stupid and dull as to be ignorant of that which was well known to the merest idiot, and that they resemble dumb beasts in imagining that God dwells and reposes in the temple. He therefore asks contemptuously, "Where is that house?" For it was absurd to think either that God dwells on the earth, or that he is concealed and shut up in a prison. Besides, the temple was built on a small mountain, and could not contain the glory of God within its limited dimensions.

And where is this place of my rest? And yet the Lord had said of the temple, "This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen it." (Ps. cxxxii. 14.) In another passage it was said, "Enter, O Lord, into thy rest." (2 Chron. vi. 41.) Besides, we have seen, in a former part of this book, that "the Lord's rest shall be glorious in it." (Is. xi. 10.) Finally, this was the ordinary designation of the temple, and yet the Prophet now finds fault with it. I reply, the temple is called God's rest, because he gave the token of his presence in the temple; for he had chosen it as the place where men should call upon him, and from which he would give a display of his strength and power. But he did not command it to be built in order that men might conceive of his majesty according to their own fancy,[2] but rather that, reminded by the outward signs of God's presence, they might raise their minds higher and rise to heaven, and acknowledge that God is greater and more excellent than the whole world. Yet, as the minds of men are prone to superstition, the Jews converted into obstacles to themselves those things which were intended to be aids; and when they ought to have risen by faith to heaven, they believed that God was bound to them, and worshipped him

[1] "Et ne mesureroyent sa grandeur infinie à leur petitesse." "And would not measure his infinite greatness by their littleness."

[2] "Afin que les hommes creussent de sa majesté tout ce que bon leur sembleroit." "In order that men might believe concerning his majesty whatever they thought fit."

only in a careless manner, or rather made sport of worshipping him at their own pleasure.

This passage is very appropriately quoted by Stephen, (Acts vii. 49,) and is indirectly accommodated by Paul to the sense which we have now stated; for they shew that those persons are grievously deceived and far astray who bring to God carnal ceremonies, as if pure worship and religion consisted of them, or who wickedly and profanely disfigure his worship by statues and images. Stephen addresses the Jews, who, being attached to the figures of the Law, disregarded true godliness; while Paul, speaking to the Gentiles, affirms that "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands." (Acts xvii. 24.)

2. *Yet my hand hath made all these things.* The Prophet refutes the false opinion which men form about the worship of God, by thinking that sacrifices and outward ceremonies are of great value in themselves; for the state of the question is this. God cares nothing about ceremonies, but they are empty and useless masks, when men think that they satisfy God by means of them. When he says that he made all these things, this must not be understood as referring solely to the temple, but to all that was there offered to God. Now he says that he "*made* all these things," in order that men may know that God has no need of this external worship, as he declares (Ps. l. 10) that all the animals were created by him, and are his own, though by sacrifices of them the Jews hoped to obtain his favour. But foolish mortals have this disease deeply seated in them, that they transform God according to their inclination, though he appointed external worship not for his sake, but for our advantage; that is, that we may be trained by it according to the capacity of our flesh.

And all these things began to be. It is the same as if he had said that he must not be compared to these things, which at one time began to be; for he is eternal and had no beginning. "I could dispense with your sacrifices," saith the Lord, "for, before they began to be, I was, and therefore they can be of no service to me." In short, he maintains that ceremonies are of no avail in themselves, but aim at a

different object. Isaiah takes for granted that it is impossible that God could receive any addition; and hence it follows that he is satisfied with himself alone; for he could do without the world from all eternity.

And I look to him who is humble and contrite in spirit. Next, a definition of lawful worship is added; for, when he says that God "looketh to the humble," I have no doubt that he who is "humble and contrite in spirit" is indirectly contrasted by him with the array, and splendour, and elegance of ceremonies, by which the eyes of men are commonly dazzled, so as to be carried away in admiration. On the other hand, the Lord testifies that he demands humble and downcast minds, and that tremble at his commandments. By these words he describes inward purity of heart and sincere desire of godliness, and at the same time shews in what way we ought to be prepared to please God.

And trembleth at my word. So far as relates to "trembling," it might be thought strange at first sight that he demands it in believers, since nothing is more sweet or gentle than the word of the Lord, and nothing is more opposite to it than to excite terror. I reply, there are two kinds of trembling; one by which they are terrified who hate and flee from God, and another which affects the heart, and promotes the obedience, of those who reverence and fear God. This clause, I am aware, is viewed by others as relating to the Law, which threatens and terrifies, and proclaims the dreadful judgment of God. But I take it in a more general acceptation; for even believers tremble at the promises when they embrace them with reverence. Hence infer that true godliness consists in having our senses brought into a state of obedience to God, and in making no boastful or wicked claims for ourselves. The nature of faith is to yield obedience to God, and to listen to him attentively and patiently when he speaks. But when we are puffed up and carried away by a vain confidence in ourselves, we have no piety or fear of God; for we cannot make even the smallest claim for ourselves without despising God.

We ought carefully to mark the expression which he employs, "Trembling at the word of God." Many boast

that they reverence and fear God; but, by disregarding his word, they at the same time shew that they are despisers of God. All the reverence that we owe to God must be paid to his word, in which he wishes to be fully recognised as in a lively image. The amount of what is said is, that God prefers this sacrifice to all others, when believers, by true self-denial, lie low in such abasement as to have no lofty opinion about themselves, but to permit themselves to be reduced to nothing. Thus also the Psalmist says, "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a contrite spirit; an afflicted heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. li. 17.) Because this modesty of faith produces obedience, this pious feeling is likewise added, that, laying aside all obstinacy, they tremble at the word of God.

From these words we ought to draw a remarkable consolation, "Though we appear to be wretched in our abasement and humility, and though we appear to be unworthy of being beheld by men, yet we are truly happy; because the Lord looks upon us, and bestows on us his favour." When we are tempted to despair, let us think that in this way the Lord exalts his servants to heaven, though they have been cast down to hell, and almost sink under the burden.

3. *He that killeth an ox, as if he slew a man.* There are two clauses in this verse. In the former, Isaiah plainly declares that all the sacrifices of his nation are of no value in the sight of God, but are held by him in abomination; in the latter, he describes the dreadful corruption by which they mingled the ceremonies of the Gentiles with the sacrifices of the Law, and in this way corrupted and perverted everything. The greater part of commentators think that these words repeal the sacrifices of the Law, but this is a mistake; for Isaiah, in this passage, treats of the same subject of which he had formerly treated in the first and fifty-eighth chapters, and does not absolutely condemn sacrifices, but rather the blemishes and corruptions of them, because the Jews thought that God was satisfied with a deceitful and empty appearance, and at the same time cared not about the true fear of God and a pure conscience. He does not speak, therefore, of the thing itself, but censures men who abused

sacrifices; because this was as much as to offer to God the shell of an empty nut. In a word, no sacrifices are acceptable to God but those which proceed from a pure heart and an upright will.

Yet it is probable that the Prophet alludes to the sacrifices of the Gentiles, which were shocking and monstrous; for they killed men, or buried them alive. Neither the Romans, (who reckoned themselves to be more religious than other nations,) nor even the Jews, abstained from this crime. Nay more, (κακόζηλοι) wicked imitators polluted themselves by many child-murders, thinking that they followed their father Abraham. Isaiah says that, "when they kill an ox, they do the same thing as if they slew a man;"[1] and thus he shews that the Jews, though they had a religion which was peculiar and which God had appointed, yet were in no respect better than the Gentiles, among whom everything was polluted and profane, and were not more highly approved by God; because the name of God is profaned by hypocrisy of religion not less than by corrupted and false worship. How necessary this admonition was, we have formerly seen; for, while the Jews were convicted of all crimes, yet, so long as they concealed themselves under this shadow, they thought that they were safe. Justly therefore does the Prophet meet them by saying, that they gain nothing more by their attempts to appease God than if they sought to offer sacrifices from the abominable sacrileges of the Gentiles.

And truly they have chosen their own ways. There are two interpretations of this passage; for the antecedent to the pronoun may either be the Gentiles or the Jews; that is, either that the Jews mingled and entangled themselves with the wicked ceremonies of the Gentiles, or that they followed their own inventions. The former exposition would not be inappropriate, were it not that it is unnatural, because the word "Gentiles" has not been formerly expressed. It was the most aggravated part of the wickedness of the Jews, that they not only abused the pure worship of God,

[1] "Qu' en sacrifiant un bœuf, c'est autant que s'ils coupoyent la gorge à un homme." "That, in sacrificing an ox, it is the same as if they were cutting a man's throat."

but likewise, through their contempt of the Law, defiled the temple and every other place by wicked and abominable superstitions. They built altars on high places, planted and reared groves, took delight in games and public entertainments, and copied everything else that was appointed by public authority for the purpose of corrupting the hearts of men. Thus there was produced among them a confused medley of superstitions, such as we now behold in Popery, in which we see various patches sewed together, taken out of every kind of superstitions, not only heathen and Jewish, but likewise such as have been recently contrived by Satan, that he might more easily, and with greater plausibility, impose on the world. These and similar practices the Prophet would justly pronounce to be doubly worthy of condemnation, because, while they boast of the name of God, and make profession of his worship, still they are not ashamed to stain and pollute that worship by the sacrileges of idolatrous nations.

The other interpretation is not obscure, and is equally appropriate, that the Jews were devoted to their own inventions, and followed their own abominations. He affirms that they do not worship God sincerely, who despise him according to their own caprice, not only because they are full of avarice, hatred, ambition, dishonesty, cruelty, and extortion, but because they corrupt the worship of God by their own contrivances. Although the pronoun refers to the Jews, yet the Prophet condemns all superstitions which they had borrowed from the heathen nations. Consequently, there is little difference between the two interpretations; for he merely teaches that, because they have insolently and rebelliously shaken off the yoke of God, because wickedness openly prevails among them, everything that proceeds from them is polluted and detestable. Streams that bring down dirty and offensive matter from a muddy and polluted fountain cannot be clean or pure. Choice and desire reveal their obstinacy more clearly; that is, because, knowingly and willingly, they despised God's commandments, and devoted their heart to everything that was opposed to them, as if they wished intentionally to disdain everything that proceeded from God, that they might obey their depraved lust.

4. *I also will choose their delusions.*[1] The Prophet means that the Jews gain nothing by holding out various and plausible pretences and by searching for excuses; because God does not care for the cunning or fine speeches of men. And indeed it is not proper to measure God by our own capacity, and we ought not to depend on human judgment; but it is our duty to judge of the works of God from his word. *I will choose;* that is, "I will scatter the clouds which they endeavour to spread over themselves, so that their delusions shall be manifest and visible to all; for now they appear to be hidden, but one day they shall be dragged forth to public view." The meaning may be thus summed up. "Because the Jews have indulged so freely in sinning that everything which they chose was preferred by them to the commandments of God, so also, in his turn, God will lay open their delusions at his pleasure."

And will bring upon them their terror.[2] Under the word "terror" he repeats the same thing, according to the custom of Hebrew writers. "I will cause them to know that they have fallen into a mistake, and that the terrors which they indulged shall fall on their own heads."[3] Thus their excuses or hypocritical pretences will be of no avail for confounding truth and falsehood and veiling superstitions; because the Lord will clearly distinguish between them.

Because I called. The Prophet again condemns the Jews for obstinacy, in not having suffered the Lord to correct them. This is the only remedy that remains for correcting our vices, that we hear the Lord speaking, when he endeavours to bring us back into the right way; but when we sear and harden our hearts, it is the worst of all evils.

[1] "'That I may mock them.' Here the word תעלוליהם (*tăgnălūlēhĕm*) means להתעולל בם, (*lĕhĭthgnōlēl bām,*) 'that I may mock them,' in the same sense as the words used in another passage, כי התעללת בי, (*kī hitlgnăllălt bī,*) 'because thou hast mocked me.' (Num. xxii. 29.)"—*Jarchi.*

[2] "Et leur feray venir les choses qu'ils craignoyent." "And will bring (or cause to come) upon them the things which they dreaded."

[3] "Je feray qu'ils cognoistront avoir failli, tellement que ce qu'ils craignoyent leur tombera dessus la teste." "I will cause them to know that they have been mistaken, and that what they dreaded has fallen on their own head."

Whenever therefore men prefer their own inventions to the ordinances and commandments of God, they openly despise God, to whose will they ought to have yielded. This is especially the case when there is added such obstinate hardness of heart as shuts the door against holy warnings, and it is vain for them to allege that they cannot displease God by doing that which they undertake for the purpose of worshipping him; for all that men, by neglecting the word, choose and follow, the Lord rejects and abhors.

Before mine eyes. He repeats what he had formerly said, that the Jews sinned in the sight of God, as if they had resolved to provoke him to anger. At length he adds their manner of doing so, that, with perverse desire, they sought what God had forbidden; nor is it without good reason that he so frequently censures the wicked insolence of men, in defrauding God of his right, by treating contemptuously what he approves.

5. *Hear the word of Jehovah.* He directs his discourse to the true worshippers of God, and promises to them what they could scarcely have expected during those terrible calamities; and he expressly addresses them, because at that time there were many who falsely boasted of the name of God. Nay more, leaving the undistinguished multitude, he directs his discourse separately to a small number, as he formerly said, "Seal the law, bind the testimony among my disciples." (Is. viii. 16.)

Ye who tremble at my word. He points out the true and sincere children of God, by this mark, that they "tremble at the word of the Lord." This indeed is an uncommon virtue; and therefore he contrasts it with the false profession of those who, by bearing the outward mark of circumcision, wished to be reckoned among the people of God, and made a great profession and show of holiness; that we may know that they alone reverence and fear God who reverence and fear his holy word; that is, who, in consequence of being powerfully impressed by hearing the voice of God, constrain all their senses to obey; for this is a remarkable proof of godliness.

Your brethren said. Because it is customary with hypo-

critical worshippers of God to make loud boasting of their pompous ritual, the design of the Prophet is, to arm and fortify believers for enduring their attacks, that they may not give way when they are mocked and insulted. As if he had said, "You have to contend not only with foreign nations, but with domestic foes, who hold a place in the Church, and who are bound by the tie of brotherhood on account of the covenant of God which is common to you all. If they mock at your simplicity in the same manner as they haughtily despise God himself, you must boldly and fearlessly resist that temptation." He therefore calls them "brethren," although they were enemies of believers and of the word of God, for it is by way of concession that he gives to them that name which they falsely usurped. Hence we infer that this is not a new evil, that enemies, who bear the name of brethren, are nourished in the bosom of the Church. This internal war must be incessantly carried on with hypocrites, who cannot patiently endure that we shall worship God with an honest and upright conscience.

Casting you out for the sake of my name. Literally, "bidding you begone." As we see the Pope thundering dreadfully against us, as if we had been base and worthless persons; so hypocrites were casting out the small number of believers; for, being superior in number, authority, and wealth, they likewise exercise that tyranny in such a manner that they approve or disapprove of everything according to their own caprice, and cause that believers may be reckoned as of no value, whom they not only overwhelm by their vast numbers, as the chaff does the wheat, but also trample proudly under their feet.

Let Jehovah be glorified. Or, in the future tense, "Jehovah will be glorified." Others translate it, "Jehovah is severe;" but let us see which is the preferable meaning. They who translate it, "Jehovah is severe," think that wicked men complain of God's excessive severity, in not sparing his people and in acting severely toward them; and they think that by this word the people were tempted to despair; for, when wicked men endeavour to turn us aside from God, they take away all hope and confidence of salva-

tion. But I give the preference to either of the other two expositions. That which is most generally approved is the following. Wicked men laughed at the prophecies and promises, because that glory which the Prophets had so frequently mentioned was nowhere to be seen; as if they had said, "Let the Lord display some testimony of his glory, that we may safely rely on it;" and therefore the Prophet wishes to arm believers against such blasphemy, that they may not allow their faith to be overturned by the sneers of wicked men. But this passage might be appropriately and perhaps more correctly interpreted to mean, that wicked men have promised very great things for themselves, as if by their good deeds they had deserved God's favour, as Amos (v. 18) also reproaches them, that, while they fearlessly provoke God, they confidently trust that he will be gracious to them. Since, therefore, relying on their sacrifices, they scorned all threatenings, and boasted that God would assist them, he replies that they shall see the glory of God in a very different manner.[1]

But he will be seen to your joy. As if he had said, "God, by his coming, will cause believers to know that they have not hoped in vain; for he will appear for the advantage of believers, and for the destruction of those who maintain that he will appear as the defender of wickedness, of which he will be the severe avenger. The former shall enjoy gladness and consolation, while the latter shall be ashamed and shall blush, for they shall quickly feel that the judgment of God, which they now laugh at, is at hand."

6. *A voice of tumult from the city, a voice from the temple.* He confirms the preceding statement; namely, that God hath not threatened in vain, that he will speedily come to take vengeance on hypocrites, in order that what has been promised concerning gladness may be more eagerly expected by believers. It is uncertain what are the enemies whom he describes; for this passage may be explained as relating to the Babylonians, whose destruction was the deliverance of his Church. It may also be explained as relating to other

[1] "Ils verront la gloire de Dieu autrement qu'ils ne pensent." "They shall see the glory of God in a different manner from what they think."

enemies, who were nourished in the bosom of the Church; and I am more favourable to this opinion, though I do not deny that it may be viewed in reference to any kind of enemies. But he has in his eye domestic foes, of whom he had formerly spoken, who disdained the voice of God continually addressing them by the mouth of the prophets. He therefore threatens that they shall speedily hear another and more terrible voice; but there is immediately added a mitigation, that the same terror may not discourage the believing servants of God.

The meaning may be thus summed up. "In vain do wicked men boast and set their own obstinacy in opposition to the judgments of God, for they shall not escape his hand, and even 'from the temple,' which was their lurking-place of false confidence, his voice shall come forth, and believers will then receive the fruit of their patience." Would that we did not at the present day experience similar contempt in hypocrites, who set at nought all remonstrances and threatenings, and have no respect for the word of God! To them, therefore, instead of the mild and gentle voice which they now hear, we are compelled to threaten "a tumultuous voice," which they shall one day hear from other and very different masters; for since the world, with irreligious scorn, disdains the word of God, it shall be constrained not only to hear, but likewise to experience, an armed voice, that is, fire and sword.

7. *Before she travailed, she brought forth.* Having formerly comforted believers, that they might not be discouraged by the insolence and contempt of brethren, whom he would at length punish, and having thus commanded them to wait for the coming of the Lord with a steady and resolute heart, the Lord at the same time adds, that he will punish them in such a manner that, by their destruction, he will provide for the safety of believers. Nor does he speak of one or two men, but of the whole Church, which he compares to a woman. The same metaphor has already been sometimes employed by him; for God chiefly aims at gathering us into one body, that we may have in it a testimony of our adoption, and may acknowledge him to be a father, and may be

nourished in the womb of the Church as our mother. This metaphor of a mother is therefore highly appropriate. It means that the Church shall be restored in such a manner that she shall obtain a large and numerous offspring, though she appear for a time to be childless and barren.

Before her pain came upon her. He repeats the same statement which he has already employed on other occasions; but he expresses something more, namely, that this work of God shall be sudden and unexpected; for he guards believers against carnal views, that they may not judge of the restoration of the Church according to their own opinion. Women carry a child in the womb for nine months, and at length give birth to it with great pain. But the Lord has a very different manner of bringing forth children; for he says that he will cause the child to see the light, before it be possible to perceive or discern it by any feeling of pain. On this account he likewise claims the whole praise for himself, because a miracle sets aside the industry of men.

She brought forth a male. He expressly mentions "a male," in order to describe the manly and courageous heart of these children; for he means that they shall be a noble offspring, and not soft or effeminate. In like manner we know that believers are regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, that they may finish, with unshaken fortitude, the course of their warfare; and in this sense Paul says that they "have not the spirit of timidity." (Rom. viii. 15.)

8. *Who hath heard such a thing?* He extols the greatness of the thing of which he has spoken; for he means that there shall be a wonderful and "unheard of" restoration of the Church; so that believers shall not judge of it from the order of nature, but from the grace of God; for when men reflect upon it, they think that it is like a dream, as the Psalmist says. (Ps. cxxvi. 1.) He does not mean that the Church shall be restored perfectly and in a moment; for the advancement of this restoration is great and long-continued, and is even slow in the estimation of the flesh; but he shews that even the beginning of it exceeds all the capacity of the human understanding. And yet he does not speak hyperbolically; for we often see that the Church

brings forth, which previously did not appear to be pregnant. Nay more, when she is thought to be barren, she is rendered fruitful by the preaching of the gospel; so that we greatly admire the event, when it has happened, which formerly we reckoned to be altogether incredible.

These things were fulfilled in some measure, when the people returned from Babylon; but a far brighter testimony was given in the gospel, by the publication of which a diversified and numerous offspring was immediately brought forth. In our own times, have we not seen the fulfilment of this prophecy? How many children has the Church brought forth during the last thirty years, in which the gospel has been preached? Has not the Lord his people, at the present day, in vast numbers, throughout the whole world? Nothing, therefore, has been here foretold that is not clearly seen.

Shall a nation be born at once? He illustrates the glory of the miracle by a metaphor. No "nation" ever came into the world in an instant; for it is by degrees that men assemble, and grow in number, and spread their nation. But the case is very different with the Church, which all at once, and in more than one place, brings forth a vast number of children. It amounts to this, that God, in a wonderful manner, will cause innumerable children of the Church, in an extraordinary manner, to be born all at once and suddenly.

Shall a land be brought forth in one day? The word אֶרֶץ, (*ĕrĕtz,*) "a land," may be taken either for any country, or for its inhabitants.

9. *Do I bring to the birth?* As in the preceding verse he extolled in lofty terms the work of God, so he now shews that it ought not to be thought incredible, and that we ought not to doubt of his power, which surpasses all the order of nature; for, if we consider who it is that speaks, and how easy it is for him to perform what he has promised, we shall not remain in such uncertainty as not instantly to recollect that the renewal of the world is in the hand of him, who would have no difficulty in creating a hundred worlds in a moment. A little before, by a burst of astonishment,

he intended to magnify the greatness of the work. But now, lest the minds of good men should be perplexed or embarrassed, he exhorts them to consider his strength; and, in order that he may more fully convince them that nothing is so difficult in the eyes of men as not to be in his power and easily performed by him, he brings forward those things which we see every day; for in a woman's bringing forth a child we see clearly his wonderful power. Shall not the Lord manifest himself to be far more wonderful in enlarging and multiplying the Church, which is the principal theatre of his glory? It is therefore exceedingly wicked to limit his strength, by believing that he is less powerful, when he shall choose to act directly and by openly stretching out his hand, than when he acts by natural means.

10. *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem.* He promises that they who formerly were sad and melancholy shall have a joyful condition; for Isaiah has in view not his own age, but the time of the captivity, during which believers continually groaned, and, overwhelmed with grief, almost despaired; and therefore he exhorts and stimulates to joy all believers, who are moved by strong affection toward the Church, and reckon nothing more desirable than her prosperity. In this way he instructs them that none shall have a share in so valuable a blessing but they who are prompted by a godly love of the Church, and desire to seek her deliverance, and that too when she is contemptible in the eyes of the world; as the Psalmist says, "For thy meek ones love her stones, and will have compassion on her dust." (Ps. cii. 14.) And therefore he adds,—

All ye that mourn for her; for, since in the captivity there was frightful and shocking desolation, and there appeared to be no longer any hope of safety, he arouses believers, and bids them be of good cheer, or at least prepare themselves for joy. And this exhortation contains also a promise and something more, for a bare promise would not have carried so much weight. But those statements must not be limited exclusively to a single period; for we ought to abide by the general rule, of which we have often spoken already, namely, that those promises must be extended from the return of the

people down to the reign of Christ, and to the full perfection of that reign.

11. *That ye may suck.* This verse ought to be joined with the preceding verse; for the Prophet explains what shall be the occasion of joy, namely, because the wretched and miserable condition of the Church shall be changed into a happy and prosperous condition. By the word "suck" he makes an allusion to young infants; as if he had said, "That you may enjoy your mother with every advantage, and may hang on her breasts." Here all believers, whatever may be their age, are compared by him to children, that they may remember their infirmity and may be confirmed by the strength of the Lord; and therefore this metaphor of "sucking" and "milking" ought to be carefully observed.

From the breast of her consolations. Some take the word "consolations" in an active, and others in a passive sense; but I prefer to adopt the passive signification; for he means the consolations which the Church has received, and of which he makes his children partakers. And indeed none can be greater or more abundant, none can be more excellent, than that ground of joy; and this appears more clearly from the following clause, "that ye may be delighted with the brightness of her glory."

12. *I cause peace to flow on her like a river.* He continues his metaphor, and compares the children of God to infants, that are carried in the arms, and warmed in the bosom of their mothers, who even play with them. And in order that he may express more strongly his affection toward us, he compares himself to a mother, whose love, as we have formerly seen, (page 30,) exceeds every other by a wide interval. (Is. xlix. 15.) The Lord wishes to be to us in the room of a mother, that, instead of the annoyances, reproaches, distresses, and anxieties, which we have endured, he may treat us gently, and, as it were, fondle us in his bosom. By the word "peace" he means prosperity.

And the glory of the Gentiles as an overflowing torrent. The word "glory" contains a repetition, by which he denotes every kind of riches, so that nothing is wanting to full and perfect peace; for, since the Gentiles had formerly lived

luxuriously, and had enjoyed a vast abundance of everything desirable, he affirms that all riches, and everything that belongs to a happy life, shall be possessed by believers, as the rivers run into the sea. By "constant flowing" he denotes continuance; for, since God is an inexhaustible fountain, his peace differs widely from the peace of the world, which quickly passes away and is dried up. Whenever therefore we behold the sad and melancholy condition of the Church, let us remember that these promises relate to us not less than to that people. Seeing that the Lord has rivers of peace which he wishes to cause to flow into his Church, let us not despair even amidst the fiercest wars; but, in our distresses and straits, let us cheer our hearts and rejoice. When he takes pleasure in us as infants, and not as men of mature age, we ought to acknowledge our condition, that we may be satisfied with such consolations. And indeed it is a token of remarkable condescension that he thus bears with our weakness.

13. *As a man*[1] *whom his mother comforteth.* It is wonderful that the Prophet, who appeared to have already spoken enough about this renewal, dwells on it so largely. But, because he can neither express the greatness and warmth of the love which God bears toward us, nor satisfy himself with speaking about it, for that reason he mentions and repeats it frequently.

And you shall have consolation in Jerusalem. There are two ways in which this may be explained. It may be said that believers shall have joyful hearts, when they shall behold the Church restored; or, that the Church, after

[1] "The English version, which in multitudes of cases inserts 'man' where the original expression is indefinite, (translating οὐδείς, for example, always 'no man,') here reverses the process, and dilutes 'a man' to 'one.' The same liberty is taken by many other versions, old and new, occasioned no doubt by a feeling of the incongruity of making a full-grown man the subject of maternal consolations. The difficulty might, if it were necessary, be avoided by explaining אִישׁ (*ish*) to mean a man-child, as it does in Gen. iv. 1; 1 Sam. i. 11; and in many other cases. But the truth is, that the solecism, which has been so carefully expunged by these translators, is an exquisite trait of patriarchal manners, in their primitive simplicity. Compare Gen. xxiv. 67; Jud. xvii. 2; 1 Kings ii. 19, 20, and the affecting scenes between Thetis and Achilles in the Iliad."—*Alexander.*

having been restored, shall discharge her duty by gladdening her children. I prefer the latter interpretation, though either of them is admissible. The former appears to be a richer interpretation; but we must consider what the Prophet meant, and not what we think the most beautiful. In the first place, indeed, he makes God the author of the joy, and justly; but, in the second place, he adds that Jerusalem is his handmaid. But this is not addressed to irreligious scorners, who are not moved by any solicitude about the Church, but to those who, with holy zeal, declare that they are her children.

14. *And ye shall see.* By the word "see," he expresses undoubted experience, that believers may not doubt as to the result, but, embracing this prediction with full belief, may patiently endure for a time the barrenness of the Church.

And your bones shall flourish as grass. He illustrates his former statement by a metaphor, saying that "their bones" shall regain their former vigour, as faded "grass" becomes fresh and green again. He mentions the "bones," which are commonly dried up by a melancholy spirit, (Prov. xvii. 22,) and, on the other hand, are replenished and invigorated by a happy and cheerful disposition. Thus he describes an ardent and invaluable joy, and seems to allude to the sadness by which believers had been almost dried up during the captivity, and had become like dead men. The Lord therefore comforts them, and promises that the Church shall flourish, and shall abound in everything that is desirable; as if bones, that wanted moisture, should regain their former vigour, or as grass, which appears to be dead during the winter, recovers its freshness every year.

And the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants. That they may cherish confidence, he nexts bids them rise to God, who will then reveal his assistance. It follows from this, that the hand of God has not always been known, but has sometimes remained concealed, as if he had no care about his people. At first sight, he appeared to have cast them off; for Daniel, and other good men, (Dan. i. 6,) not less than Zedekiah, (Jer. lii. 9,) were carried into

captivity. He says, that when the fine weather shall smile upon them, there shall be such a distinction between the good and the bad, as to make manifest this hand, which formerly was in some measure hidden; because he will no longer conceal himself, or permit the wicked to ravage without control, but will openly shew how great is his solicitude about his people. If therefore for a time the enemies have the superiority, and pursue their lawless course without being punished, if we appear to be overlooked and destitute of all assistance, let us not despair; for the time will come when the Lord will reveal himself, and will rescue us from their assaults and tyranny.

15. *For, lo, Jehovah will come in fire.* The object of this (ὑποτύπωσις) lively description is, that believers, when they see worthless men laughing at their distresses, and growing more and more insolent, may not on that account turn aside from the right path, or lose courage; for he intended not only to smite wicked men, who are moved by no threatenings, and scorn all instruction,[1] but to comfort good men, that they may feel that they are happy, because they are under God's protection; and may not attach themselves to the wicked on account of the prosperity of all their undertakings. Their advantage is, therefore, what he has chiefly in view, that they may be satisfied with God's protection and grace. But it may admit of doubt whether or not he includes the last judgment, along with the temporal punishments with which he now begins to chastise the wicked. For my own part, I have no doubt that he intends to include that judgment also, along with those which were only the forerunners of eternal destruction.

Will come. This began to be accomplished, when, by carrying away the people to Babylon, God took vengeance on domestic foes. Next, when the time of the deliverance was accomplished, he attacked more severely the wicked Gentiles by an armed force, and ceased not to give other and various proofs of his approach, by which he shewed himself to be present with the elect people, and came in

[1] "Et se moquent de tout ce qu'on leur dit." "And mock at everything that is said to them."

fire to judge their enemies. Lastly, we know that he will come in fire at the last day, to take vengeance on all the wicked. But this passage ought not to be limited to the last judgment, so as to include all the rest. Yet these threatenings, as we shall see soon afterwards, are especially directed by the Prophet against hypocritical Jews.

These metaphorical expressions are very customary in Scripture; for we could not comprehend this dreadful judgment of God in any other way than by the Prophets employing metaphors drawn from known and familiar objects. (2 Thess. i. 8; 2 Pet. iii. 7.) By means of them the prophets endeavour to make a deep impression on our senses, that, struck with the true fear of God, we may not envy the wicked, for whom such dreadful vengeance is prepared. Hence we see how trivial and useless are the speculations of the Sophists, who dispute about the refined nature and qualities of that fire; for the design of Scripture is to point out to us under figures the dreadful judgment of God, which otherwise we could not imagine or understand. This is still more evident from the word "sword," in the following verse; for it conveys the same meaning.

16. *For Jehovah will judge in fire.* Here he brings forward nothing new, but merely confirms the former statement, and shews that this judgment will be dreadful; that none may think that it is a matter of small importance. Accordingly, he describes that horror in strong language, that the wicked may fear, and that believers, on the other hand, may keep themselves holy and chaste, and may withdraw from the society of the wicked. Yet let them endure patiently the unjust and cruel attacks of enemies, till the armed avenger come forth from heaven.[1]

And many shall be the slain of Jehovah. He threatens the destruction of all men, so that there may be a prodigious mass of corpses. And he expressly added this, because ungodliness reigned everywhere, and believers were subjected to a dangerous temptation on account of the prosperity of

[1] "Jusques a tant que Dieu vienne du ciel a main armee pour en faire vengeance." "Till God come from heaven with an armed force, to take vengeance on them."

the wicked; for such is the fickleness of our minds, that we allow ourselves to be led away by a bad custom, and are alarmed by a multitude, as if it were sufficient for restraining the hand of God. This sinful fear the Prophet corrects by reminding them, that the more ungodliness shall abound, and the greater the number of wicked men, so much the more will the wrath of the Lord be kindled, that he may make a greater and more extensive slaughter; and the multitude and conspiracy of the ungodly shall not hinder him from carrying them away by the same ruin.

17. *They who sanctify themselves.* He now describes those enemies of whom he said, that God's anger would be kindled against them; for it might have been doubtful whether he spoke of foreign and avowed enemies, or directed his discourse to the despisers of God, although they had been mixed with those who were elect and holy; and therefore he plainly addresses the false and degenerate Jews. Nor have I any doubt that, in the first place, he rebukes hypocrites, and, in the second place, when he says, "Who eat swine's flesh," he describes men of immoral lives, that is, those who were openly wicked and grossly licentious. Hypocrites sanctified themselves, that is, assumed false disguises of holiness, and deceived many under this pretence.

They *purified themselves in the gardens;* that is, they polluted themselves with various superstitions, although they imagined that, by means of those superstitions, they rendered themselves pure in the sight of God. Others, without any reserve, despised God and all religion. It is therefore a general statement, in which he includes all the ungodly, to whatever class they may belong; that is, both those who openly display their wickedness, and those who hide and cover it by various disguises.

Behind one in the midst.[1] Some commentators supply

[1] "Gessenius attaches to it here (as he does in 2 Sam. iv. 6) the sense of the interior or court of an oriental house, and applies it to the edifice in which the lustrations were performed before entering the gardens; which may also be the meaning of the Septuagint version, εἰς τοὺς κήπους, ἐν τοῖς περιβόλοις. Maurer and others follow Scaliger, who makes it mean the midst of the grove or garden, where the idol was commonly erected. But Knobel, by ingeniously combining Gen. xlii. 5; Ps. xlii. 5; Ps. lxviii. 26, makes

the word "pool," or "laver;" as if holy water had been placed "in the midst" of the garden for ablutions. But another meaning would be equally appropriate; that every one chose a God for himself exclusively, and therefore every one out of many trees had his own tree.

18. *For I—their works, and their thoughts.*[1] He confirms what he said in the preceding verse; namely, that punishment shall be executed on all the ungodly, in order that, although the Lord permit them for a time to sin with impunity, yet believers, being convinced that they shall one day be punished, may guard against following their example. The Lord here testifies that he sees and observes their works, and that one day he will actually manifest that none can be concealed from his eyes. Others understand by it that the ungodly can accomplish nothing without God's permission. That statement is indeed true, but is not applicable to this passage; for everybody sees that it is unnatural, and at variance with the context of the Prophet, who merely confirms what he formerly said, that hypocrites and wicked men shall not finally escape with impunity, because God perceives all their actions, and schemes, and thoughts; and that they gain nothing by their evasions, as if they were never to be dragged to the judgment.

Because the time is come. These words confirm still more what has been already said, for he says that the time is at hand when he shall assemble all the nations, that he may cast off the hypocrites and ungodly, and gather and adopt a people to himself from among them. The Jews were puffed up with pride, and despised all other nations as unholy. But the Lord declares that he will adopt those nations, that they may be partakers of his glory, of which the Jews prove themselves to be unworthy.

This is a remarkable passage, which teaches us that God is not confined to any people, so as not to choose whomsoever he pleases, by casting off unbelievers whom he formerly

it not improbable that "in the midst," means in the crowd or procession of worshippers."—*Alexander.*

[1] "Car je voy leurs œuvres et leurs pensees." "For I see their works and their thoughts."

called to himself. This is abundantly explained by Paul, (Rom. x. 19; xi. 25,) where he shews that we have come into a possession which was left empty, after the Jews were cast off through their unbelief. Isaiah now threatens them in this manner. "Think not that God is in want of peoples when you have revolted and have rendered yourselves unworthy of his grace, for he will have others; but he will shew that he is the judge, and will not finally permit you to abuse so great forbearance."

And they shall come. He says that "they shall come," because, being ingrafted by unity of faith, they shall be united in the Church with the true Jews, who have not swerved from the adoption; for, in consequence of the Jews being near to God, the Gentiles, who were at a distance, must be joined to them, that, by the removal of disagreement, they might become one body.

And shall see my glory. To "see the glory" of the Lord, is nothing else than to enjoy that grace which he had bestowed on the Jews; for the special privilege of that nation was, that they beheld the glory of God, and had tokens of his presence. He says that now the Gentiles, who had not enjoyed these benefits, shall see and behold that glory, for the Lord will reveal himself to all without exception.

19. *And I will place in them a sign.* This may be understood in two ways; either that God holds out a sign, or that by some symbol or mark he seals his own people, that they may be placed in safety. The former exposition is more generally approved, but some reason childishly about it as relating to the sign of the cross, while others refer it to the preaching of the Gospel. In my opinion both are mistaken; for he seems rather to allude to what, Moses tells us, happened at the departure and deliverance of the people. It is also declared (Rev. vii. 3) that "as many as the Lord hath sealed" shall be safe, even when his anger shall be fiercely kindled throughout the whole world; just as they whose door-posts were marked in Egypt escaped safely. (Exod. xii. 13.) And thus he shews that none can escape God's wrath, except the elect, on whom the Lord has impressed his mark and seal.

And will send some of them, being reserved. In a word,

the Prophet heightens the description of what has been already said about the grievous and terrible vengeance which the Lord will execute on the ungodly; for all would have perished without distinction if the Lord had not marked some of them with his seal. From the general destruction of the whole nation, therefore, he says that he will reserve a small number. And this is the true meaning of the Prophet; just as he had said, in other passages, that he would rescue "a remnant" from the general conflagration. (Isa. i. 9; x. 22.) Of this band, which had been reserved, he says that some shall be his heralds to celebrate his name among the Gentiles; just as we see that the doctrine of salvation, by the agency of a few, was spread far and wide.

To the nations of Tarshish, Pul, and Lud. By the name "Tarshish" he denotes Cilicia, and includes the whole coast of the Mediterranean Sea opposite to Judea. Others think that it denotes Africa and Cappadocia; but I rather adopt the former view. By *Lud*, some suppose Lydia to be meant; and others, Asia Minor. By "those who draw the bow" are meant the Parthians, because they were skilful in archery. By Tubal and Javan he denotes Italy and Greece, and by the Islands he denotes unknown countries; for by the name "Islands," as we have seen on many former occasions, the Jews denoted all that lay beyond the sea.

Which have not heard my name. He means that the knowledge of God shall be spread throughout the whole world; for the Greeks, Italians, Parthians, Cilicians, and other nations had heard nothing about pure religion and the true worship of God; and the whole world was plunged in the deepest darkness of ignorance. He therefore promises that the glory of God shall be known in every part of the world. The word "nations" is emphatic; for at that time the Lord was known to not more than one people, but now he has revealed himself to all.

20. *And they shall bring.* Here he clearly explains what was formerly said, namely, that all who shall escape and survive, though they be few in number, shall nevertheless be priests, who shall bring sacrifices to God from all places. He alludes to the ancient ceremony of the Law, though he

points out the difference that will be between those oblations and the sacrifices of the ancient Law; for he appoints a new kind of punishment and new sacrifices. As he had said that he would gather all the nations, so he now shews that the priests, whom he had appointed, shall not labour in vain; for God will grant prosperity to their undertakings.

All your brethren. He gives the name of "brethren" to those who formerly were strangers; for he has in his eye the new relation which arises from faith. We know that foreign nations were ingrafted by faith into the family of Abraham. Yet others bring out a different meaning, which I do not absolutely reject. "When God shall gather a new people to himself out of foreign nations, the Jews, who had been scattered in all directions, shall be brought into one place." This was also accomplished; but it seems more appropriate to refer it to the calling of the Gentiles, because at that time, by the removal of the difference, a brotherly relation began to be established among all whom God wished to adopt to be his children. Abraham was the father of one nation, and yet not all who were descended from him according to the flesh are accounted his children; for the Ishmaelites and the Edomites were rejected. (Rom. ix. 7.) The time when he became "the father of many nations" (Gen. xvii. 5; Rom. iv. 17) was when God adopted the Gentiles, and joined them to himself by a covenant, that they might follow the faith of Abraham. And thus we see the reason why the Prophet gives the name of "brethren" of the Jews to us, who formerly were aliens from the Church of God. It is because he had previously cast out of their place false and reprobate brethren.

It is our duty to observe this fruit which is produced by the godly labours of those who faithfully serve the Lord, namely, that they "bring their brethren" from deadly errors to God, the fountain of life. By this consolation they ought to cheer their hearts, and to support them amidst the distresses and tribulations which they endure. The Lord does not suffer any of his own people to perish. Thus it is a high enjoyment and privilege, when he wishes to make use of our labours for delivering our "brethren."

Out of all nations. He means that there shall no longer

be any difference between Jews and Gentiles; because God will throw down "the partition-wall," (Eph. ii. 14,) and will form a Church "out of all nations." And thus was fulfill d the saying of David concerning Christ, "Ask of me; I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. ii. 8.)

When he speaks of the "holy mountain," he accommodates himself to the customs and usages of that period; for at Jerusalem God was worshipped in the temple. But now the temple is everywhere diffused; for everywhere we are at liberty to "lift up holy hands to God," (1 Tim. ii. 8,) and there is no longer any distinction of places. He likewise mentions *oblations* and sacrifices, which were offered in the temple; although the sacrifices which are now to be offered differ widely from the ancient sacrifices. But the prophets, as we have frequently remarked, were under a necessity of borrowing comparisons from known and familiar objects. Formerly the sacrifices were taken from the flocks and herds; but the Apostles and other priests of Christ slew men themselves, and offered them as a living sacrifice to God by the Gospel. Paul testifies that he discharged the office of the priesthood, when he slew men by the sword of the Gospel, "that they might be an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." (Rom. xv. 16.)

It is not therefore a legal priesthood, and does not resemble that of the Papists, who say that they sacrifice Christ;[1] but it is the priesthood of the Gospel, by which men are slain, in order that, being renewed by the Spirit, they may be offered to the Lord. Thus, whomsoever we can gain to Christ, we offer in sacrifice, that they may be wholly consecrated to God. Moreover, every person sacrifices when he devotes and dedicates himself to God, and offers to him unreserved obedience; and this is the sacrifice which Paul calls "reasonable." (Rom. xii. 1.) The end of our calling is here pointed out to be, that, washing away our pollutions, and being dead to ourselves, we may learn to devote ourselves to the cultivation of holiness.

[1] "Qui se vantent de sacrifier Iesus Christ." "Who boast of sacrificing Jesus Christ."

With horses and chariots. There are some who endeavour to find an allegory here, and who think that the Prophet made use of the word "bring" on this account, that the Gospel does not constrain men by fear, but rather draws them gently, so that of their own accord they betake themselves to God, and run with cheerfulness and joy. But for my own part, I take a simpler view of this passage. Because this doubt might arise in the minds of many persons, "How is it possible that men shall come to us from countries so distant?" he replies, "Horses, chariots, and carriages shall not be wanting; for the Lord has at his command all that can be of service for assisting his people and conducting them to the end which he has in view." Yet I do not deny that the Gospel may be called a "chariot," because it conveys us to the hope of eternal life; but I think that the Prophet simply declares that nothing shall hinder God from gathering his Church, and that he will have at his command all the necessary means, that none of the elect whom he has called may fail in the middle of the course.

21. *And I will even take some of them for priests and Levites.* The Prophet heightens the description of that which he had already declared about the extraordinary grace of God. He had made known that the Church of God should be collected out of all nations, so that, in spite of every difficulty and obstruction, even distant nations should draw near to them. But now he proceeds further, and instructs them that the Gentiles shall not only be adopted by God, but shall also be elevated by him to the highest honour. Already it was a great honour, that unclean and polluted nations were reckoned to be a holy people; but now here is something far more wonderful, that they are elevated to the highest pinnacle of rank.

Hence we see that the priesthood under Christ is very different from what it was under the Law; for under the Law one tribe exclusively was admitted to the priesthood, and the Gentiles, as unclean, were so far from having it in their power to discharge that priesthood, that they were even forbidden to enter into the temple; but now all are admitted without distinction. Some expound this passage in

a general manner, that the Gentiles shall be priests; that is, shall offer themselves to God, as Scripture frequently denominates all believers "a royal priesthood." (1 Peter ii. 9; Rev. i. 6; v. 10.) But he appears to describe in an especial manner ministers and teachers whom the Lord also chose from among the Gentiles, and appointed to execute this distinguished office; that is, to preach the Gospel; such as Luke, Timothy, and others of the same class, who offered spiritual sacrifices to God by the Gospel.

22. *For as the new heavens.* Here he promises that the restoration of the Church shall be of such a nature that it shall last for ever. Many might be afraid that it would be ruined a second time; and therefore he declares that henceforth, after having been restored by God, its condition shall be permanent. Accordingly, he mentions here two benefits of surpassing excellence, restoration and eternity. When he speaks of "new heavens" and a "new earth," he looks to the reign of Christ, by whom all things have been renewed, as the Apostle teaches in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Now the design of this newness is, that the condition of the Church may always continue to be prosperous and happy. What is old tends to decay; what is restored and renewed must be of longer continuance. (Heb. viii. 13.)

So shall your seed and your name remain. God had promised that "the sun and moon," so long as they remained in heaven, should be witnesses of the eternal succession, that the posterity of David might not be cut off. But because some interruption arose from the treachery and ingratitude of the people, the restoration effected by Christ actually confirmed that prediction. Justly, therefore, does Isaiah say, "Your sons shall succeed to you, and your grandsons shall succeed to your sons;" and as God will establish the world, that it may never perish, so the succession of the Church shall be perpetual, that it may be prolonged through all ages.

In a word, he explains what he had formerly said about renewing the world, that none may think that this relates to trees, or beasts, or the order of the stars; for it must be referred to the inward renewal of man. The ancients were

mistaken when they thought that these things related absolutely to the last judgment; and they had not sufficiently weighed the context of the Prophet or the authority of the Apostle. Yet I do not deny that they extend as far as to that judgment, because we must not hope for a perfect restoration before Christ, who is the life of the world, shall appear; but we must begin higher, even with that deliverance by which Christ regenerates his people, that they may be new creatures. (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

23. *From a month to his month, and from a Sabbath to his Sabbath.*[1] The Prophet again points out what shall be the difference between the nature of the spiritual worship of God which shall be under the reign of Christ and of the carnal worship which was under the Law. Sacrifices were offered every month at the new moon. There were Sabbaths, and other festivals, and solemn days, which they carefully observed. But under the reign of Christ there shall be a constant and uninterrupted solemnity; for there are not fixed and stated days of sacrifices on which we must go to Jerusalem, or offer anything in one place or in another; but our oblations, festivals, and rejoicings are continued from day to day in unbroken succession. Yet he alludes to the ancient custom of sacrifices, as we have already said that the prophets are frequently accustomed to do.

So then the Lord wishes to have "pure sacrifices" offered to him daily, (1 Peter ii. 5,) not such as were formerly offered under the Law or are now offered by Papists, who either rely foolishly on their ceremonies, as if they were expiations of crime, or basely venture to sacrifice Christ,[2] but spiritual sacrifices, that we may reverence and adore God with a pure and sincere worship. (John iv. 24.) As to the opinion held by some, that this passage proves the abrogation of the Law and of ancient ceremonies, it does not appear to me to rest on sufficient grounds. It is indeed certain that those

[1] "Depuis un mois jusques à un autre mois, et depuis un Sabbat jusques à son autre Sabbat." "From one month till another month, and from one Sabbath till his other Sabbath."

[2] "Ou mesmes d'une audace desesperee osent se vanter qu'ils sacrifient Jesus Christ." "Or even with desperate audacity dare to boast that they sacrifice Jesus Christ."

legal ceremonies have been set aside, and that may be gathered from this passage; but in proof of that point I would choose to employ other passages which contain stronger evidence. There is only here a contrast between the Sabbath and festivals which were celebrated under the Law, and the perpetual Sabbath which we have at the present day. (Heb. iv. 9, 10.)

24. *And they shall go forth.* We must not here attempt to obtain subtle and ingenious interpretations; for he simply informs those who shall be adopted into the Church that they shall see, all around them, the dreadful vengeance of God. Yet there is an implied contrast between the straits of the calamity and the free departure; as if he had said, "Out of the dark prison in which they had been confined they shall again come forth to the light."

And shall see the dead bodies of men. He does not mean that this slaughter shall take place in the assembly of believers; for this would greatly diminish the happiness of the Church, in which God displays all testimonies of joy and gladness. But as he formerly spoke of the perpetual glory by which he shall dignify his people, so he now threatens the punishment which he shall inflict on the reprobate, that the godly may be more careful to keep themselves in the fear of God.

And their fire shall not be extinguished. When he says that they shall be tormented by "fire," this mode of expression, as I have formerly remarked,[1] is metaphorical. And this is clearly evident from the succeeding clause; for *worms* will not be formed out of the earth to gnaw the hearts of unbelievers. The plain meaning, therefore, is, that the wicked shall have a bad conscience as an executioner, to torment them without end, and that torment awaits them greater than all other torments; and finally, that they shall tremble and be agitated in a dreadful and shocking manner, as if a worm were gnawing the heart of a man, or a fire were consuming it, and yet thus consumed, he did not die.

And they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh. Because the wicked are now held in the highest honour, and from their

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, vol. ii. p. 387.

lofty position look down with contempt on good men, the Prophet threatens a shocking change; for, along with unutterable torments, they shall also endure the deepest disgrace; as it is just and right that they who despised and reproached the glory of God shall be loaded with every reproach, and shall be the objects of abhorrence to angels and to the whole world.

END OF THE COMMENTARY ON ISAIAH.

A TRANSLATION

OF

CALVIN'S VERSION

OF

THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.

CHAPTERS XLIX.—LXVI.

CHAPTER XLIX.

1 Hear me, O islands!
And hearken, ye peoples from afar.
Jehovah hath called me from the womb;
From my mother's belly he hath had my name in remembrance.
2 And he hath placed my mouth like a sharp sword;
In the shadow of his hand he hath protected me,
And hath placed me as a polished arrow;
In his quiver hath he hid me;
3 And said to me,
Thou art my servant, O Israel!
In thee will I be glorified.
4 But I said,
In vain have I toiled;
Uselessly and unprofitably have I exhausted my strength;
But my judgment is before Jehovah;
And my work before my God.

5 And now saith Jehovah,
Who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
That I may bring back Jacob to him:
And though Israel be not gathered,
Yet I shall be glorious in the eyes of Jehovah,
And my God shall be my strength.

6 And he saith, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant,
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And that thou shouldst restore the desolations of Israel;
Therefore have I appointed thee to be a light of the Gentiles,
That thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth.
7 Thus saith Jehovah,
The Redeemer of Israel,
His Holy One,
To the contemptible in the soul,
To the abhorred nation,
To the servant of rulers;
Kings shall see,
And princes shall arise,
And shall worship for the sake of Jehovah;
For faithful is the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee.

8 Thus saith Jehovah,
In a time of good-pleasure have I listened to thee;
In the day of salvation have I assisted thee;
And I will preserve thee,
And give thee for a covenant of the people,
That thou mayest raise up the earth,
That thou mayest possess by inheritance the desolate heritages;
9 That thou mayest say to them that are bound, Go forth!
To them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves.
On the ways they shall feed;
On all the high places shall be their pastures.
10 They shall not hunger nor thirst;
The heat and the sun shall not smite them;
For he that hath compassion on them shall guide them;
And by the fountains of waters shall he lead them.
11 And I will place all my mountains for a way;
And my paths shall be elevated.
12 Behold! those from afar shall come;
And, behold! those from the North, and from the sea;
And those from the land of Sinis.[1]

13 Praise ye, O heavens!
And rejoice, thou earth;
And break forth into praise, ye mountains;
For Jehovah hath comforted his people,
And will have compassion on his poor.
14 Yet Zion hath said,
Jehovah hath forsaken me,

[1] Or, Sinim.

And my Lord hath forgotten me.
15 Shall a woman forget her infant,
So as not to have compassion on the son of her womb?
Even though they have forgotten,
Yet will not I forget thee.
16 Behold! on the palms of my hands have I engraven thee;
Thy walls are continually before me.
17 Thy builders hasten;
Thy destroyers and demolishers shall depart far from thee.

18 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see.
All are assembled, and have come to thee.
I live, saith Jehovah,
That thou shalt be clothed with them all, as with an ornament,
And shalt be bound with them round about as a bride.
19 For thy desolations, and thy wastes, and thy ruined land,
Shall now be too narrow for the multitude of its inhabitants;
And thy destroyers shall depart far away.
20 The children of thy bereavement shall yet say in thine ears,
The place is too narrow for me;
Make room for me, that I may dwell.
21 And thou shalt say in thine heart,
Who hath begotten me those?
For I am bereaved[1] and solitary,
A wanderer and an exile;
Who then hath brought up those?
Behold! I was left alone;
Whence are they?

22 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah,
Behold! I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles,
And will erect my banner to the people;
And they shall bring thy sons in their bosom,
And thy daughters shall be carried on their shoulders.
23 And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers,
And their queens thy nurses;
With their faces on the ground they shall worship thee,
And shall lick the dust of thy feet;
And thou shalt know that I am Jehovah,
For they who wait for me shall not be ashamed.
24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty?
And shall the captivity of the righteous[2] be delivered?
25 Yet thus saith Jehovah;
Even the captivity of the mighty shall be taken away,
And the prey of the tyrant shall be delivered;
For I will contend with him who contendeth with thee,

[1] Or, Barren. [2] Or, The righteous captivity.

And I will save thy children.
26 And I will feed thy spoilers with their own flesh,
And they shall be made drunk with their own blood as with new wine;
And all flesh shall know that I am Jehovah,
Thy Saviour and thy Redeemer,
The Mighty One of Jacob.

CHAPTER L.

1 Thus saith Jehovah:
Where is that bill of your mother's divorcement,
Whom I have dismissed?
Or who is the creditor
To whom I sold you?
Behold! for your iniquities ye have been sold,
And for your transgressions was your mother dismissed.
2 Why came I, and no man (met me)?
Called I, and no man answered?
By shortening hath my hand been shortened,
So that it cannot redeem?
Is there not in me power to deliver?
Behold! by my rebuke I dry up the sea;
I put rivers in the wilderness,
So that their fishes putrify for want of water,
And die for thirst.
3 I clothe the heavens with blackness,
And make their covering like sackcloth.

4 The Lord Jehovah hath given me the tongue of the learned,
That I may know a word in season to the weary.
In the morning will he awaken,
In the morning will he awaken mine ear,
That I may hear as the learned.
5 The Lord Jehovah hath opened mine ear,
And I was not rebellious:
I did not turn back.
6 I exposed my body to the smiters,
And my cheeks to them that tore me;
My face I did not hide from shame and spitting.
7 For the Lord Jehovah will assist me;
Therefore I was not ashamed;
Therefore have I set my face as a flint;
And I know that I shall not be confounded.
8 He is near that justifieth me:
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together:

Who is the opponent of my cause?
Let him draw near to me.
9 Behold! the Lord Jehovah will assist me;
Who is he that shall condemn me?
Behold! all shall wax old as a garment;
The moth shall consume them.

10 Who is there among you that feareth Jehovah?
Let him hear the voice of his servant.
He who hath walked in darkness,
And hath had no light;
Let him trust in the name of Jehovah,
And rely on his God.
11 Behold! ye all kindle a fire,
And are surrounded with sparks.
Walk ye in the light of your fire,
And in the sparks which ye have kindled.
From my hand hath this been to you;
In sorrow shall ye lie down.

CHAPTER LI.

1 Hearken to me, ye that follow righteousness,
Ye that seek Jehovah;
Look ye to the rock of your hewing,
And to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged.
2 Look ye to Abraham your father;
And to Sarah, who bore you;
For I called him alone,
And blessed and multiplied him.
3 Surely Jehovah will comfort Zion;
He will comfort all her desolations;
And he will make her desert like a place of delights,
And her wilderness like the garden of Jehovah:
Gladness and joy shall be found in her;
Confession and the voice of a song.

4 Attend to me, my people;
And listen to me, my nation;
For the law shall go forth from me;
And I will reveal my judgment for a light of the peoples.
5 My righteousness is near;
My salvation hath gone forth;
And my arms shall judge the peoples:
For me shall the islands wait,
And in my arm shall they hope.
6 Lift up your eyes toward heaven,

And look upon the earth beneath;
For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke,
And the earth shall wax old like a garment,
And its inhabitants shall perish in the same manner;
But my salvation shall endure for ever,
And my righteousness shall not perish.

7 Hearken to me, ye that know righteousness;
A people in whose heart is my law.
Fear ye not the reproach of men,
And be not discouraged by their slander.
8 For the moth shall consume them like a garment;
The worm shall consume them like wool;
But my righteousness shall continually endure,
And my salvation for ever and ever.

9 Awake, O arm of Jehovah!
Awake, be clothed with strength!
Awake as in ancient days,
As in generations long ago past.
Art thou not that arm which crushed the proud one,
Which slew the dragon?
10 Art thou not that arm which dried up the sea,
The water of the vast gulf;
Which turned the depth of the sea into a path,
For the passage of the redeemed?
11 Therefore the redeemed by Jehovah shall return;
They shall come to Zion with a song;
And everlasting joy shall be upon their head;
They shall obtain gladness and joy,
And sorrow and groaning shall flee away.
12 I, I am he that comforteth you.
Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid
Of man that shall die,
Of the son of man, that shall be accounted grass?
13 And hast forgotten Jehovah thy Maker,
Who stretched out the heavens,
And founded the earth;
And hast dreaded continually every day
The rage of the destroyer,
When he prepareth to lay waste?
And where is the rage of the destroyer?
14 The exile hasteneth to be loosed,
That he may not die in a pit,
And that his bread may not fail.
15 And I am Jehovah thy God,
Who divide the sea,
And its waves roar;

Jehovah of hosts is his name.
16 And I have put my words in thy mouth;
And in the shadow of my hand have I protected thee;
That I may plant the heavens and found the earth;
That I may say to Zion, Thou art my people.

17 Awake, awake, O Jerusalem!
Arise, thou who hast drunk from the hand of Jehovah the cup of his fury;
Pressing out, thou hast drunk the dregs of the cup of distress.[1]
18 Of all the sons whom she bore
There is no one to guide her;
Of all the sons whom she brought up
There is no one to take her by the hand.
19 These two things have happened to thee;
Who shall bewail thee?
Desolation and destruction,
And the famine and the sword;
Who shall comfort thee?
20 Thy sons have fainted;
They lay down at the head of all the streets,
As a wild bull in a net,
Full of the indignation of Jehovah,
Of the rebuke of thy God.

21 Therefore now hear this, thou afflicted,
And drunken, but not with wine
22 Thus saith thy Lord, Jehovah,
And thy God, the avenger of his people;
Behold! I have taken out of thy hand
The cup of affliction,[2]
The dregs of the cup of my fury;
Thou shalt not drink of it any more.
23 And I will put it into the hand of thy oppressors,
Who said to thy soul, Bow down, and we shall pass over;
And thou didst lay thy body as the ground,
And as the street to them that pass over.

CHAPTER LII.

1 Awake, awake, O Zion!
Be clothed with thy strength,
Be clothed with the garments of thy beauty,
O Jerusalem! the holy city;
For there shall no longer come into thee
The uncircumcised and unclean.

[1] Or, Of trembling. [2] Or, Of trembling.

2 Shake thyself from the dust;
Arise, sit, O Jerusalem!
Loose thyself from the chains of thy neck,
O captive daughter of Zion!
3 For thus saith Jehovah:
For nought were ye sold;
Therefore shall ye be redeemed without money.
4 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah:
Into Egypt my people went down aforetime,
That they might sojourn there;
But Assyria hath oppressed them without cause.
5 And now, What have I here, saith Jehovah,
That my people should be carried away for nought,
And that they who rule over them should cause them to howl,
Saith Jehovah,
And that every day continually
My name should be exposed to reproach?
6 Therefore shall my people know my name;
Therefore shall they know in that day
That it is I who speak;
Behold! I shall be present.

7 How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him that bringeth tidings,
That proclaimeth peace,
That bringeth good tidings,
That proclaimeth salvation,
That saith to Zion, Thy God reigneth!
8 The voice of thy watchmen!
They have lifted up the voice;
They shall shout for joy together;
For they shall see eye to eye,
When Jehovah shall restore Zion.
9 Praise ye, and rejoice together,
Ye wildernesses of Jerusalem;
For Jehovah hath comforted his people;
He hath redeemed Jerusalem.
10 Before the eyes of all the nations
Jehovah hath made bare the arm of his holiness;
And all the ends of the earth
Shall see the salvation of our God.

11 Depart ye, depart ye;
Go ye out thence;
Touch not the unclean thing;
Go ye out of the midst of her;
Be clean, ye that bear the vessels of Jehovah.
12 For not in haste shall ye go out,

And not in flight shall be your journey;
For Jehovah shall go before you,
And the God of Israel shall assemble you.

13 Behold! my servant shall have prosperous success,
Shall be exalted,
Shall be lifted up,
And shall be very high.
14 As many were shocked at thee;
(So much was his face disfigured by men,[1]
And his form by the sons of men;[2])
15 So shall he sprinkle many nations;
Kings shall shut their mouths on him;
For what had not been declared to them they shall see,
And what they had not heard they shall understand.

CHAPTER LIII.

1 Who will believe our report?
And to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed?
2 Yet he shall grow up before him as a twig,
And as a root out of a desert land;
He hath no form nor beauty;
We will see him;
And his countenance is not such that we should desire him.
3 Despised and rejected among men;
A man of sorrows;
Acquainted with infirmity;
We hid, as it were, the face from him;
And we did not at all esteem him.

4 Surely our sicknesses he bare;
And our sorrows he carried;
And we thought him to be smitten,
Wounded by God and afflicted.
5 But he was wounded for our iniquities;
He was bruised for our sins;
The chastisement of our peace was upon him;
And in his wound[3] we have healing.
6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray;
Every one hath turned to his own way;
And Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all.

7 He was condemned and afflicted;[4]
And he opened not his mouth.

[1] Or, More than men.
[2] Or, More than the sons of men.
[3] Or, In his medicine.
[4] Or, Oppressed.

As a lamb shall he be led to the slaughter;
And as a sheep before her shearers shall he be dumb,
And shall not open his mouth.
8 From prison and judgment was he taken;
And who shall relate his generation?
For he was cut off out of the land of the living;
For the transgression of my people was he wounded.
9 And he laid open to wicked men his grave,
And to the rich man his death.
Although he did no iniquity,
And there was no deceit in his mouth.
10 Yet Jehovah was pleased to bruise him,
And to subject him to infirmity.

When he shall have offered his soul as a sacrifice,
He shall see a seed;[1]
He shall prolong his days;
And the will of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand.
11 Of the labour of his soul he shall see, and shall be satisfied;
And by his doctrine[2] shall my righteous servant justify many;
For he shall bear their iniquities.
12 Therefore will I divide to him a portion with the great;
And he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
Because he poured out his soul unto death,
And was ranked with the transgressors;
He bare the sin of many,
And prayed for the transgressors.

CHAPTER LIV.

1 Shout, O barren, that didst not bear;
Shout and sing, thou that didst not conceive;
For more are the children of the widow
Than the children of the married woman, saith Jehovah.
2 Widen the place of thy tabernacles;
And let them stretch out the curtains of thy tents;
Spare not;
Lengthen thy cords,
And strengthen thy stakes.
3 For on the right hand and on the left thou shalt be multiplied;
And thy seed shall possess the Gentiles;
And they shall inhabit the desolate cities.

4 Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed;
And blush not, for thou shalt not be exposed to disgrace;

[1] Or, He shall see posterity. [2] Or, By the knowledge of him.

Yea, the shame of thy youth thou shalt forget;
And the reproach of thy widowhood thou shalt no longer remember.
5 For thy husband is thy Maker,
Whose name is Jehovah of hosts;
And thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel;
The God of the whole earth shall he be called.[1]
6 For as a woman forsaken and broken in spirit
Jehovah hath called thee;
And a wife of youth,
Who hadst been dismissed,
Saith thy God.
7 For a little moment have I forsaken thee,
And with great mercies will I gather thee.
8 In a moment of wrath I hid my face for a little from thee;
But with everlasting kindness have I had compassion on thee,
Saith Jehovah thy Redeemer.
9 For the waters of Noah[2] this is to me;
As I have sworn that the waters of Noah
Shall no more pass over the earth;
So have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee,
Nor rebuke thee.
10 For the mountains shall indeed be shaken,
And the hills shall tremble;
But my mercy shall not depart from thee,
And the covenant of my peace shall not waver,
Saith Jehovah, who hath compassion on thee.

11 O thou wretched, tossed by a tempest,
Destitute of consolation;
Behold! I will build thy stones on carbuncles,
And will found thee on sapphires.
12 And I will lay thy windows with pearls,
And thy gates with shining stone,
And all thy borders with precious stone.
13 For all thy children shall be taught by Jehovah,
And thy children shall have great peace.
14 In righteousness shalt thou be equipped;
Thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear it;
And from terror, for it shall not come near thee.
15 And he who assembleth shall assemble against thee without me;
He who assembleth in thee shall fall against thee.

16 Behold! I have created the smith,
That bloweth the coals in the fire,

[1] Or, The Holy One of Israel shall be called the Redeemer and God of the whole earth.
[2] Or, As the days of Noah.

And bringeth out the instrument for his work;
I have created the waster to destroy.
17 No instrument that hath been formed against thee shall prosper;
And every tongue that hath risen against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.
This is the inheritance of the servants of Jehovah;
And their righteousness is from me, saith Jehovah.

CHAPTER LV.

1 Ho! all that are thirsty,
Come ye to the waters;
And ye who have not money,
Come ye, buy, and eat.
Come ye, buy without money,
And wine and milk without any price.
2 Wherefore do ye spend[1] money, not for bread?
And your labour, not so as to be satisfied?
Hear ye by hearing me;
And eat ye that which is good;
And let your soul delight itself in fatness.
3 Incline your ear, and come to me;
Hear, and your soul shall live;
And I will strike a covenant of eternity with you,
The faithful mercies of David.
4 Behold! I have given him a witness to the peoples,
A leader and instructor to the peoples.
5 Behold! thou shalt call a nation which thou knowest not;
And a nation that knew not thee shall run to thee;
For the sake of Jehovah thy God,
And of the Holy One of Israel;
For he hath glorified thee.

6 Seek ye Jehovah, while he is found;
Call upon him, while he is near.
7 Let the wicked man forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
Let him return to Jehovah, and he will have compassion on him;
To our God; for he aboundeth in pardoning.
8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
And my ways are not your ways, saith Jehovah.
9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So far do my ways exceed your ways,
And my thoughts your thoughts.

[1] Or, Weigh out.

10 Surely, as the rain cometh down,
And the snow from heaven,
And returneth not thither,
But watereth the earth,
And causeth it to bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater;
11 So shall be my word which shall go out of my mouth
It shall not return to me empty;
Till it do what I wish,
And accomplish that to which I sent it.
12 Therefore with peace shall ye go out,
And with peace shall ye be led forth;
The mountains and hills shall break out before you into joy,
And all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands.
13 Instead of the bramble shall grow up the fir-tree;
And instead of the nettle[1] shall grow up the myrtle;[2]
And it shall be to Jehovah for a name;
For an everlasting covenant, that shall not be cut off.

CHAPTER LVI.

1 Thus saith Jehovah;
Keep ye judgment,
And do righteousness;
For my salvation is near, that it may come;
And my righteousness, that it may be revealed.
2 Happy is the man who shall do this,
And the son of man who shall take hold of this;
Keeping the Sabbath, so that he may not profane it;
And keeping his hand, that he may abstain from all that is evil.
3 And let not the son, that is a foreigner, speak,
That is joined to Jehovah, saying,
By separating hath Jehovah separated me from his people;
And let not the eunuch say,
I am a dry tree.
4 For thus saith Jehovah to the eunuchs,
Who keep my Sabbaths,
And choose the things that please me,
And take hold of my covenant;
5 In my house and within my walls
I will give to them a place and a name
Better than of sons and of daughters;
I will give to them an everlasting name

[1] Or, The thorn. [2] Or, The Elm.

Which shall not be cut off.
6 The children, I say, of the foreigner,
Who shall be joined to Jehovah,
That they may minister to him,
And may love the name of Jehovah;
That they may be his servants;
Whosoever shall keep the Sabbath, so that he may not profane it,
And shall embrace my covenant:
7 Them will I bring into the mountain of my holiness,
And will make them joyful in my house of prayer;
Their burnt-offerings and sacrifices
Shall be acceptable on mine altar;
For my house shall be called
A house of prayer to all peoples.
8 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah,
Who gathereth the outcasts of Israel:
Still more will I gather upon him his gathered.

9 O all ye beasts of the field!
Come to devour;
O all ye beasts of the forest!
10 His watchmen are blind;
All are ignorant;
All are dumb dogs, that cannot bark;
They lie down and sleep;
They love slumber.
11 And those dogs, strong of appetite, know not to be satisfied;
The shepherds themselves know not, nor understand;
All of them look to their own ways;
Every one to his gain from his end.
12 Come ye, I will fetch wine;
We shall drink strong liquor;
As to-day, so shall be to-morrow,
Or better, and more abundant.

CHAPTER LVII.

1 The righteous man hath perished,
And there is no man that layeth it to heart:
Men of mercy are gathered,
And there is none that considereth
That the righteous man is gathered from the face of the evil.
2 Peace shall come;
They shall rest in their beds,
Whosoever walketh before him.

3 And draw near, ye sons of the sorceress;

The seed of the adulterer and the whore.
4 On whom have ye made sport?
On whom have ye opened the mouth?
On whom have ye stretched out the tongue?
Are ye not rebellious children?
A lying seed?
5 Warming themselves among the oaks[1] under every green tree;
Sacrificing children in the valleys,
Under the cliffs of the rocks.
6 Among the smooth stones of the valley[2] is thy portion;
They, they are thy lot;
Even to them hast thou poured out a drink-offering,
And offered a sacrifice.
Shall I take pleasure in these things?[3]

7 On a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed;
Yea, thou art gone up to it to offer a sacrifice.
8 Behind the door and behind the door-post
Hast thou set thy memorial;
Thou hast been discovered to another than me;
Thou art gone up;
Thou hast enlarged thy bed;
Thou hast made a covenant with them;
Thou lovedst their bed in the place which thou sawest.
9 And thou wentest to the king with ointment;
Thou multipliedst thy disguises;
Thou sentest thy ambassadors to a distant place;
Thou art humbled even to hell.
10 Thou art wearied with thy manifold journeying;
And hast not said, There is no hope:
Thou hast found the life of thine hand;
Therefore thou hast not grieved.

11 And whom hast thou worshipped,
And of whom hast thou been afraid,
That thou hast dealt falsely,
And hast not remembered me,
Nor laid it on thy heart?
Is it not because I have held my peace,
And therefore thou never fearest me?
12 I will declare thy righteousness, and thy deeds;
And they shall not profit thee.
13 When thou shalt cry, let thy troops deliver thee;
Yet the wind shall carry them all away;
Vanity shall seize them.

[1] Or, With the gods. [2] Or, In parts of the river
[3] Or, Shall I repent of these things?

But he who hopeth in me shall obtain the land by inheritance,
And shall possess the mountain of my holiness.

14 And he shall say, Prepare, prepare;
Level the road;
Remove the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.
15 For thus hath spoken the High and Lofty One,
Who dwelleth in eternity,
Whose name is Holy;
I inhabit the high and holy,
And with the afflicted,
And with him who is lowly in spirit;
That I may revive the spirit of the lowly,
That I may revive the heart of the afflicted.
16 For I will not contend for ever,
Nor will I be always wroth;
For the spirit shall be clothed[1] before me,
And the wind have I made.

17 For the iniquity of his lust I was wroth, and smote him;
I have concealed myself, and will be wroth;
But he turned and departed in the way of his heart.
18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him,
And will lead him, restoring consolations
To him and to his mourners.
19 I create the fruit of the lips;
Peace, peace to them that are afar off,
And to them that are near, saith Jehovah,
And I heal him.
20 But the wicked are as the troubled sea,
Which cannot rest;
And its waters will cast out filth and mud.
21 There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.

CHAPTER LVIII.

1 Cry with the throat, spare not;
Raise thy voice as with a trumpet;
And proclaim to my people their sin,
And to the house of Jacob their iniquity.
2 Yet they seek me daily,
And wish to know my ways,
As a nation that did righteousness,
And neglected not the judgment of her God;
They inquire at me about the judgments of righteousness:

[1] Or, Shall be concealed, or, Shall fail.

They wish to approach to God.
3 Wherefore have we fasted, and thou didst not take notice of it?
Wherefore have we humbled our souls, and thou knewest not?
Behold! on the day that ye fast, ye find pleasure,
And exact all your demands.
4 Behold! for strife and contention ye fast,
And that ye may smite with the wicked fist.
Fast not, as ye do this day,
That ye may cause your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it such a fast as I have chosen?
That a man may afflict his soul for a day,
And may hang down his head as a bulrush,
And may spread sackcloth and ashes?
Wilt thou call this a fast,
And a day acceptable to Jehovah?
6 Is not this the fast that I have chosen?
To loose wicked bonds,
To undo heavy burdens,
To let the oppressed go free,
And that ye may burst asunder every yoke?
7 Is it not that thou shalt break thy bread to the hungry,
And shalt bring the wandering poor to thy house?
If thou shalt see the naked, that thou shalt cover him;
And that thou shalt not hide thyself from thine own flesh?
8 Then shall break forth as the dawn thy light;
And thy health shall quickly spring up;
Righteousness shall go before thy face,
And the glory of Jehovah shall gather thee.
9 Then shalt thou call, and Jehovah will listen;
Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Behold! I am here.

If thou shalt take away from the midst of thee the burden,
And the pointing of the finger,
And the speech of vanity;[1]
10 If thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry man,
And shalt satisfy the afflicted soul,
Thy light shall arise in darkness,
And thy obscurity as noon-day.
11 And Jehovah shall always conduct thee,
And shall satisfy thy soul in drought,
And shall make fat thy bones;
And thou shalt be as a well-watered garden,
And as a fountain of waters,
Whose waters fail not.

[1] Or, The unprofitable speech.

12 And from thee shall be those who shall restore the deserts of the age;
Thou shalt raise up the foundations of generation and generation;
And thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach,
The restorer of paths for inhabiting.

13 If thou shalt turn away thy foot from the Sabbath,
And shalt not do thy pleasure on my holy day,
And shalt call the Sabbath a delight,
To consecrate it to Jehovah, because it is honourable,
And shall give honour to it,
So as not to follow thine own ways,
Nor to find thine own pleasure,
Nor to speak thine own words;
14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah;
And I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth,
And will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.

CHAPTER LIX.

1 Behold! the hand of Jehovah is not shortened,
That it cannot save;
Nor is his ear heavy,
That it cannot hear.
2 But your sins have made a separation
Between you and your God;
And your sins have hidden his face from you,
That he may not hear.
3 For your hands are polluted with blood,
And your fingers with iniquity;
Your lips have uttered falsehood;
Your tongue hath spoken wickedness.

4 There is none that crieth for justice,
None that contendeth for truth;
They trust in vain things, and talk idly;
They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.
5 They hatch the eggs of the basilisk,
And weave the webs of spiders;
He that eateth of their eggs shall die;
If they be crushed, there shall come forth a viper.
6 Their webs shall not become clothing,
And they shall not cover themselves with their works;
For their works are works of iniquity;[1]

[1] Or, Of vanity.

And the work of violence is in their hands.
7 Their feet run to evil,
And hasten to shed innocent blood;
Their thoughts are vain thoughts;[1]
Wasting and destruction are in their paths.
8 The way of peace they know not;
And there is no judgment in their steps:
They have corrupted their paths;
Whosoever walketh by them shall not know peace.

9 Therefore judgment hath departed far from us;
And justice doth not overtake us.
We looked for light, and, behold! obscurity;
For brightness, and, behold! we walk amidst thick darkness.
10 We grope for the wall like the blind;
We grope like those who have been deprived of sight;
We stumble at noon-day as in the night;
In solitary places like dead men.
11 We all roar like bears;
And moaning, we moan like doves

We looked for judgment, and it is not visible;
For salvation, and it is far off from us.
12 For our iniquities are multiplied before thee;
And our sins have testified against us;[2]
For our iniquities are with us,
And we know our sins.
13 We have done wickedly,
And have lied to Jehovah,
And have turned back from our God;
Speaking slander and revolt;
Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.
14 And judgment is driven back,
And justice is far off;
For truth is fallen in the street,
And equity cannot come forth.
15 Yea, truth faileth;
And he who hath withdrawn from evil hath become a prey.

And Jehovah saw it;
And it displeased his eyes, that there was no judgment.
16 He saw that there was no man,
And wondered that none came forward;[3]
Therefore his arm brought[4] salvation to him;
And his righteousness, it upheld him.

[1] Or, Thoughts of iniquity.
[2] Or, Our sins answer to us.
[3] Or, Interceded.
[4] Or, Made.

17 And he put on righteousness as a coat of mail,
And the helmet of salvation on his head;
He put on vengeance as a robe,
And was clothed with indignation as a cloak.
18 As if for the sake of recompenses,
As if for rendering vengeance,
For rendering indignation to his adversaries,
Recompense to his enemies,
He will render recompense to the islands.

19 Therefore they shall fear the name of Jehovah from the west,
And his glory from the rising of the sun;
For the enemy shall come as a river;
And the Spirit of Jehovah shall drive him.[1]
20 And a Redeemer shall come to Zion,
And to them who have returned from iniquity in Jacob,
Saith Jehovah.
21 And this my covenant I make with them, saith Jehovah;
My Spirit that is upon thee,
And my words which I have put in thy mouth,
Shall not depart out of thy mouth,
Nor out of the mouth of thy seed,
Nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith Jehovah,
From this time even for ever.

CHAPTER LX.

1 Arise, be bright;
For thy brightness is come;
And the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee.
2 For, behold! darkness shall cover the earth,
And thick darkness the peoples;
But Jehovah shall arise upon thee;
And his glory shall be seen upon thee.
3 And the Gentiles shall walk to thy brightness,
And kings to the lustre of thy rising.
4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see.
They all are assembled, that they may come to thee;
Thy sons shall come from afar;
Thy daughters shall be nursed at the side.
5 Then thou shalt see, and shalt be bright;
Thou shalt tremble, and thy heart shall be enlarged;
Because the abundance of the sea[2] shall be converted to thee;
The riches[3] of the Gentiles shall come to thee.

[1] Or, Shall chase him away. [2] Or, The multitude of the sea.
[3] Or, Strength

6 A multitude of camels shall cover thee,
Of the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
All they from Sheba shall come;
They shall bring gold and incense,
And shall declare the praises of Jehovah.
7 All the sheep of Kedar shall be gathered together to thee;
The rams of Nebaioth shall minister to thee;
They shall ascend to the good-pleasure of mine altar;
And I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who are those that fly as a cloud,
And as doves to their windows?
9 Surely the islands shall wait for me,
And the ships of Tarshish;
That they may bring thy sons from afar,
Their silver and their gold with them,
To the name of Jehovah thy God,
And to the Holy One of Israel;
For he hath glorified thee.
10 And the sons of the foreigner shall build thy walls,
And their kings shall minister to thee;
For in my wrath I smote thee;
And in my loving-kindness have I had compassion on thee.
11 And thy gates shall be open continually;
They shall not be shut by day nor by night;
That the riches[1] of the Gentiles may be carried to thee,
And that their kings may be led.
12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;
The nations, I say, shall be utterly destroyed.
13 The glory of Lebanon shall come to thee;
The fir-tree, the pine, and the box together;
To the beauty[2] of the place of my holiness;
For I will glorify the place of my feet.

14 And the sons of them that afflict thee
Shall come bending to thee;
And all who despised thee
Shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet;
And they shall call thee the City of Jehovah,
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
15 Instead of thy having been forsaken and hated,
So that no man passed through thee,
I will make thee an eternal excellency,
The joy of generation and generation.
16 And thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles;

[1] Or, Strength. [2] Or, To adorn.

Thou shalt suck the breast of kings;
And thou shalt know that I Jehovah
Am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer,
The Mighty One of Jacob.
17 For brass I will bring gold;
And for iron I will bring silver;
And for wood, brass;
And for stones, iron;
And I will make thy magistracy peace,
And thine exactors, righteousness.
18 Oppression shall no longer be heard in thy land;
Wasting or destruction within thy borders;
And thou shalt call thy walls Salvation,
And thy gates, Praise.

19 And thou shalt no longer have the sun for the light of days,
Nor shall the brightness of the moon give light to thee;
For Jehovah shall be to thee an everlasting light,
And thy God shall be thy glory.
20 Thy sun shall no longer set;
And thy moon shall no longer wane;
For Jehovah shall be to thee an everlasting light;
And the days of thy mourning shall be ended.
21 Thy people also shall all be righteous;
They shall inherit the land for ever;
The branch of his planting shall be the work of my hands,
That I may be glorified.
22 A little one shall become a thousand;
A small one, a strong nation;
I Jehovah will hasten this in her time.

CHAPTER LXI.

1 The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me;
On that account Jehovah hath anointed me;
He hath sent me to preach to the afflicted;[1]
To bind up the broken in heart;
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
The opening of the prison to them that are bound.
2 To proclaim the year of the good-pleasure of Jehovah,
And the day of vengeance to our God;
To comfort all that mourn.
3 To appoint to the mourners in Zion;
That I may give to them beauty instead of ashes,
The oil of joy instead of mourning,

[1] Or, To the meek.

The garment of gladness instead of an afflicted spirit;
To call them trees of righteousness,
The plantation of Jehovah,
To glorify him.

4 And they shall build the deserts of the age;
They shall raise up the ancient wildernesses;
And they shall restore the cities of desolation,
The wildernesses of many ages.
5 And strangers shall stand and feed your sheep;
And the sons of the foreigner shall be
Your husbandmen and vine-dressers.
6 But ye shall be called the Priests of Jehovah;
Men shall call you the Ministers of our God;
Ye shall eat the substance of the Gentiles;
And ye shall rise by their glory.

7 Instead of your shame there shall be a double reward;
And instead of disgrace they shall rejoice in their portion;
For in their land they shall possess the double,
And they shall have everlasting joy.
8 For I Jehovah love judgment;
I hate robbery in the burnt-offering;
And I will establish their work in truth,
And will make an everlasting covenant with them.
9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles;
And their offspring in the midst of the peoples;
All who see them shall acknowledge them
That they are the seed blessed by Jehovah.

10 Rejoicing I will rejoice in Jehovah;
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation;
He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness;
As a bridegroom hath he adorned me,
And as a bride decorated with her jewels.
11 For, as the earth putteth forth her bud,
And as the garden causeth her seed to spring up,
So the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness to spring up,
And praise before all the nations.

CHAPTER LXII.

1 On account of Zion I will not be silent;
And on account of Jerusalem I will not rest;
Till her righteousness go forth as brightness,

And till her salvation burn like a lamp.
2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness,
And all the kings of the earth thy glory;
And thou shalt be called by a new name,
Which the mouth of Jehovah shall name.
3 And thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah;
And the diadem of the kingdom in the hand of thy God.
4 Thou shalt no more be called forsaken;
Nor shall thy land be any more called desolate;
For they shall call thee, My good-pleasure in her;
And they shall call thy land, Married;
For the good-pleasure of Jehovah is in thee,
And thy land shall be married.
5 For, as a young man marrieth a virgin,
So shall thy sons marry thee;
And with the joy of the bridegroom over the bride
Thy God will rejoice over thee.

6 On thy walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen,
Who, during the whole day and the whole night together,
Shall not keep silence.
Ye that are mindful[1] of Jehovah,
Be ye not silent;
7 And give him not silence,
Till he establish,
And till he make Jerusalem
A praise in the earth.
8 Jehovah hath sworn by his right hand,
And by the arm of his strength;
If I shall any more give thy corn
For food to thine enemies,
And if the sons of the foreigner shall drink thy wine
For which thou hast laboured.
9 For they who have gathered it shall eat it,
And shall praise Jehovah;
And they that collect it shall drink wine
In my holy courts.

10 Pass through, pass through the gates;
Clear the way for the people;
Level, level the road;
Pave it with stones;
Lift up a standard to the peoples.
11 Behold! Jehovah hath proclaimed to the end of the earth;
Say ye to the daughter of Zion,
Behold! thy Saviour cometh;

[1] Or, That celebrate the memory.

Behold! his reward is with him,
And the effect of his work is before him.
12 And they shall call thee, A holy people,
Redeemed by Jehovah;
And they shall call thee
The City sought out,
Not forsaken.

CHAPTER LXIII.

1 Who is this that cometh from Edom?
With red garments from Bozrah?
This that is beautiful in his raiment,
Marching in the greatness of his strength?
I, who speak in righteousness,
Mighty to save.
2 Wherefore is thy raiment red?
And thy garments like one that treadeth in the wine-press?
3 Alone have I pressed the wine-press;
And of the peoples there was none with me;
For I will tread them in my wrath,
And will trample them down in my fury;
And their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments,
And I will stain all my raiment.
4 For the day of vengeance is in my heart;
And the year of my redeemed is come.
5 Therefore I looked, and there was none to help;
And I wondered that there was none to uphold;
Therefore mine arm brought salvation to me
And my wrath upheld me.
6 And I will tread down the peoples in my wrath,
And will make them drunk in my fury,
And will cast down their strength to the earth.

7 The mercies of Jehovah will I keep in remembrance,
The praises of Jehovah;
According to all that Jehovah hath bestowed on us,
And in the abundance of kindness toward the house of Israel,
Which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies,
And according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.
8 For he said, Surely they are my people;
Children that do not lie;
Therefore he became their Saviour.
9 In all their affliction he was afflicted;[1]
And the angel of his presence saved them;

[1] Or, In all their affliction there was no affliction.

In his love and in his compassion he redeemed them;
And he bare them and carried them all the days of the age.

10 But they were rebellious,
And provoked his Holy Spirit;
Therefore he was turned to be their enemy,
And fought against them.
11 And he remembered the days of old,
In which Moses was with his people.
Where is he that made them to come up out of the sea,
With the shepherd of his flock?
Where is he that put his Holy Spirit in the midst of them?
12 That led them by the right hand of Moses,
By the arm of his glory;
That divided the waters before them,
That he might gain for himself an everlasting name?
13 That made them walk through the depths,
As a horse in the desert,
So that they did not stumble?
14 He went down, as a beast into a plain;
The Spirit of Jehovah gave him rest;
So didst thou lead thy people,
That thou mightst make for thyself a glorious name.

15 Look down from heaven;
Behold from the habitation
Of thy holiness and of thy glory.
Where is thy zeal and thy strength?
The multitude of thy bowels
And of thy compassions toward me
Have been restrained.
16 Surely thou art our Father,
Though Abraham do not know us,
And Israel do not acknowledge us;
Yet thou art our Father and our Redeemer;
From everlasting is thy name.
17 Why didst thou cause us, O Jehovah,
To wander from thy ways?
Why didst thou cause our heart
To depart from thy fear?
Return, on account of thy servants,
To the tribes of thine inheritance.
18 For a little time the people of thy holiness possessed it;
Our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.
19 For a long period have we been
They over whom thou hast not ruled,
On whom thy name hath not been called.

CHAPTER LXIV.

1 O that thou wouldst rend the heavens!
That thou wouldst come down!
That the mountains would flow down at thy presence!
2 As by the burning of a melting fire,[1]
The fire hath made the waters to boil,
That thou mightst make thy name known to thine adversaries;
The nations trembled at thy presence.
3 When thou didst terrible things,
Which we looked not for,
Thou camest down;
The mountains flowed down at thy presence.
4 From of old they have not heard,
Nor perceived by the ears;
Eye hath not seen a God besides thee,
That doeth such things to him that waiteth for him.
5 Thou hast met him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness;
In thy ways they remembered thee;
Behold! thou wast angry, and we have sinned;
In them is perpetuity, and we shall be saved.[2]
6 And we have all been as the unclean;
And all our righteousnesses as a defiled garment;
And we all fade as a leaf;
And our iniquities, as the wind,
Have carried us away.
7 There is none that calleth on thy name,
Nor that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee;
For thou hast hidden thy face from us,
And hast made us to languish
In the hand of our iniquity.
8 And now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father;
We are the clay, and thou our potter;
We all are the work of thy hands.
9 Be not angry, O Jehovah, beyond measure;
Neither remember iniquity for ever.
Behold! see, we beseech thee,
We all are thy people.
10 The cities of thy holiness have been a desert;
Zion hath been a desert;
Jerusalem hath been a wilderness.
11 The house of our sanctuary and of our glory,
In which our fathers praised thee,
Hath been burnt with fire;

[1] Or, As by a burning fire that melteth. [2] Or, We have been saved.

And all our desirable things are laid waste.
12 Wilt thou restrain thyself for these things, O Jehovah!
Wilt thou be silent?
And wilt thou afflict us beyond measure?

CHAPTER LXV.

1 I have manifested myself to them that asked not;
I have been found by them that sought me not;
I said, Behold me, behold me,
To a nation that called not on my name.
2 I have stretched out my hands every day
To a rebellious people,
Walking in a way not good,
After their own thoughts.
3 A people that provoketh me always to my face,
That sacrificeth in gardens,
And offereth incense on bricks:
4 Who dwell in the graves;
Who pass the night in the deserts;
Who eat swine's flesh;
And broth of unclean things is in their vessels:
5 Who say, Remain by thyself;
Approach not to me;
For I would sanctify thee;[1]
Those shall be smoke in my fury,
A fire that burneth all the day.
6 Behold! it is written before me;
I will not be silent from rendering
And recompensing into their bosom,
7 Your iniquities,
And the iniquities of your fathers together, saith Jehovah.
Because they have offered incense on the mountains,
And have dishonoured me on the hills,
Therefore I will measure back their ancient work
Into their bosom.

8 Thus saith Jehovah:
As if one should find a grape in a cluster,
And should say, Destroy it not,
For a blessing is in it;
So will I do for the sake of my servants,
That I may not destroy the whole.
9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob,
And out of Judah the heir of my mountains;

[1] Or, For I am holier than thou.

And mine elect shall possess it by inheritance;
And my servants shall dwell there.
10 And Sharon shall be an abode of flocks,
And the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in,
To my people who have sought me.

11 But ye are forsakers of Jehovah,
Who forget the mountain of my holiness,
Who prepare a table for the army,
And fill an oblation to the number.
12 Therefore I will number you to the sword,
And ye all shall be cut down by slaughter;
Because I called, and ye answered not;
I spake, and ye heard not;
And ye did evil before mine eyes,
And chose the things in which I took no pleasure.

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah:
Behold! my servants shall eat, and ye shall be hungry;
Behold! my servants shall drink, and ye shall be thirsty;
Behold! my servants shall rejoice, and ye shall be covered with shame.
14 Behold! my servants shall shout for gladness of heart;
And ye shall cry aloud for grief of heart,
And shall howl for anguish of spirit.
15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse to mine elect;
The Lord Jehovah shall slay you,
And shall call his servants by another name.

16 He who blesseth himself in the earth
Shall bless himself in the faithful God;
And he who sweareth in the earth
Shall swear by the faithful God;
For the former afflictions
Are surrendered to forgetfulness,
And hidden from mine eyes.
17 For, behold! I will create
New heavens and a new earth;
The former shall not be remembered,
Nor come into mind.
18 But rejoice and be glad for ever
In the things which I create;
For, behold! I create Jerusalem a rejoicing,
And her people a joy.
19 And I will be glad in Jerusalem,
And will rejoice in my people;
And the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her,
Nor the voice of crying.

20 There shall be no more there an infant of days,
Nor an old man that fulfilleth not his days;
For the son of a hundred years shall die young;
And the sinner who is the son of a hundred years shall be accursed.

21 They shall build houses,
And shall inhabit them;
They shall plant vines,
And shall eat the fruit of them.
22 They shall not build that another may inhabit;
They shall not plant that another may eat;
For according to the days of a tree
Shall be the days of my people;
And mine elect shall perpetually enjoy
The work of their hands.
23 They shall not toil in vain;
And they shall not bring forth in terror;
For the seed of the blessed of Jehovah shall they be,
And their offspring with them.

24 And it shall be, before they cry, I will listen;
While they are yet speaking, I will hear.
25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox;
And the serpent shall have dust for his food.
They shall not destroy,
And shall not hurt,
In all my holy mountain, saith Jehovah.

CHAPTER LXVI.

1 Thus saith Jehovah:
Heaven is my throne,
And the earth is my footstool:
Where is that house which ye will build for me?
And where is this place of my rest?
2 Yet all these things hath my hand made,
And all these things began to be, saith Jehovah;
And I look to him who is humble
And contrite in spirit,
And who trembleth at my word.

3 He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man;
He that sacrificeth a sheep, as if he stabbed a dog;
He that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's flesh;
He that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol;

And truly they have chosen their own ways;
And their soul hath delighted in their abominations.
4 I also will choose their delusions,
And will bring upon them their terror;
Because I called, and no man answered;
I spake, and they heard not;
And they did evil before mine eyes,
And chose those things in which I take no delight.

5 Hear the word of Jehovah,
Ye that tremble at his word.
Your brethren that hate you,
And that cast you out for my name's sake,
Have said, Let Jehovah be glorified.[1]
But he shall be seen to your joy,
And they shall be ashamed.

6 A voice of tumult from the city!
A voice from the temple!
The voice of Jehovah!
Rendering recompense to his adversaries.

7 Before she was in labour, she brought forth;
Before her pain came upon her, she was delivered of a male.
8 Who hath heard such a thing?
Who hath seen such a thing?
Shall the earth bring forth in one day?
Shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion had the pains of child-bearing,
Immediately she brought forth.
9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not bring forth? saith Jehovah.
Shall I cause to bear, and yet restrain? saith thy God.

10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem,
And be glad with her,
All ye that love her;
Rejoice for joy with her,
All ye that mourn for her;
11 That ye may suck and be satisfied
From the breast of her consolations;
That ye may milk and be delighted
With the brightness of her glory.
12 For thus saith Jehovah:
Behold! I cause peace to flow on her like a river,
And the glory of the Gentiles as an overflowing torrent;
Thus ye shall suck;

[1] Or, Jehovah is severe, or, Jehovah shall be glorified.

Ye shall be carried on the shoulder,
And shall be dandled on the knees.
13 As a man whom his mother comforteth,
So will I comfort you;
And ye shall have comfort on Jerusalem.
14 And ye shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;
And your bones shall flourish like the grass;
And the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants,
And he shall be enraged against his enemies.
15 For, behold! Jehovah shall come in fire;
And his chariots, as a whirlwind;
That he may utter his wrath in fury,
And his rebuke in a flame of fire.
16 For with fire, and with his sword,
Shall Jehovah judge all flesh;
And many shall be the slain of Jehovah.

17 They that sanctify themselves,
And that purify themselves in the gardens behind one in the midst,
That eat swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse,
Shall be consumed together, saith Jehovah.
18 For I (know) their deeds and their thoughts;
Because the time is come,
That I should assemble all nations and languages;
And they shall come, and shall see my glory.
19 And I will put a mark upon them,
And will send some of them that are escaped
To the nations of Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow
To Tubal and Javan;
To the distant islands,
Which have not heard my name,
And have not seen my glory;
And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

20 And they shall bring all your brethren,
Out of all nations,
An oblation to Jehovah,
On horses, and chariots, and waggons,
On mules and swift animals,
To my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah;
As the children of Israel bring in a clean vessel
To the house of Jehovah.
21 And even some of them will I take
For priests and Levites, saith Jehovah.
22 For, as the new heavens and the new earth, which I make,
Remain before me, saith Jehovah;
So shall your seed and your name remain.

23 And it shall be,
That from month to his month,
And from Sabbath to his Sabbath,
All flesh shall come
To worship before me, saith Jehovah.
24 And they shall go forth, and shall see
The carcases of the men who have rebelled against me;
For their worm shall not die,
And their fire shall not be quenched;
And they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

END OF NEW TRANSLATION.

INDICES

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COMMENTARY ON THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

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